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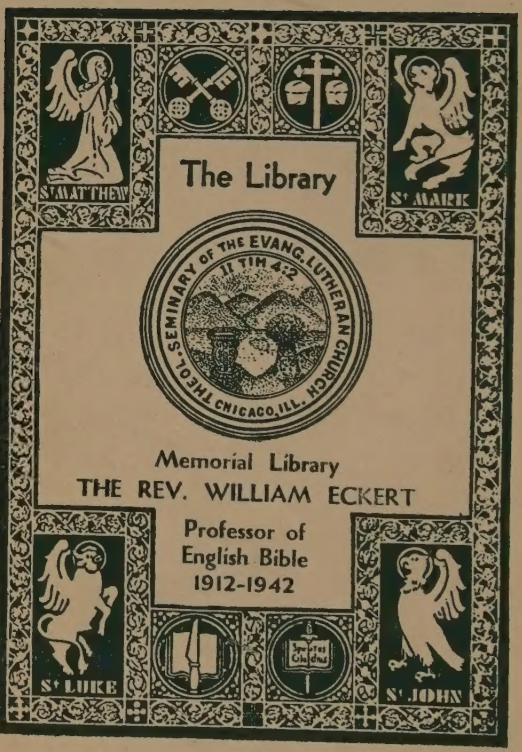


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# THE HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

## THE WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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# THE HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

## PRELIMINARY SURVEY

Was it in the impenetrable darkness of a corner far removed from the light of history, that there arose upon the world the power which has exerted the most profound influence upon the whole nature of mankind from its most elementary motives to its loftiest aims? So many imagine in these days—many for whom has vanished that heavenly light which shed its radiance over the cradle of past generations. But it was not so!—rather the paths, by which Christianity made its entrance into the world, were illumined by the clear light of a world of civilisation and culture.

This is true also in its right measure of the life of Him from whom the whole movement took its origin. Though the soil upon which He worked was at that time upon the circumference rather than at the centre of the circle of civilisation, it was nevertheless a cultivated soil which for some thousand of years had its share, both giving and receiving, first in Oriental then in Græco-Roman civilisation. It possessed besides a sure testimony of higher culture in a literature which reached far back into the past and was still living and growing.

This culture, when one looks closely, is reflected in some form or other in every word and simile of Jesus as also in the whole course of His history; though in His special ministry our Lord had no need of all the means which this culture afforded Him. He could only be, He only wished to be and to offer to others, what He was in Himself! — a personality complete and self-sufficing, whose creative energy proceeded from its God as its only

source. His mission was thus defined for Him. He must call into life in the souls of others the treasure of His own soul. He must leave His own impress upon His immediate environment, and through them upon mankind by means of direct personal influence. He has not, therefore, seized upon one of the most notable instruments which culture affords—He has not committed Himself to writing. That He could use the pen we may be sure since He was brought up in the regular Jewish workshop; that He was gifted for authorship stands beyond question with one who was the creator of the Parables.

When however we pass to those who were in the first wave of the movement initiated by Him, we find writing resorted to so constantly and industriously as to astonish us when we consider the smallness of the number of Christians and the peculiar enthusiastic spirit by which they were inspired. This of itself proves that Christianity from the beginning was of the sphere of civilisation

and culture. The very first generation of Christians created for itself a literature.

The significance of this literature in itself, and its importance for the future of Christianity, can scarcely be rated at too high a value. To these its most ancient scriptures, next to the Person of its Founder, Christianity owes the faculty of self-recollection which has prevented this religion, amid the maze of history, from ever quite losing its own peculiar character; which has indeed ever again enabled it to renew its youth and to preserve itself inwardly independent of the changing factors of human development.

The irreplaceable value of this ancient literature was clearly recognised from the first. It was carefully preserved; it was at an early date distinguished from the imitations and new literary ventures of a later generation working under quite different conditions; and finally it was united into a complete whole, forming our New Testament. To this body of scripture the Christians then assigned

determining authority, supporting its claims by a peculiar theory as to the origin of these writings—the so-called doctrine of Inspiration. The beginnings of such a collection of writings reach far back behind the formation of the Canon. Perhaps St Paul himself made such a beginning with his own epistles; certainly the communities founded by him made collections of these particular writings either during his lifetime or soon afterwards. This was followed by the compilation of the four gospels which, according to clear indications, could not have taken place later than the fourth decade of the second century. Round this nucleus the other books gradually collected, and by the beginning of the third century all the essential writings of the New Testament were already canonised—*i.e.* were admitted into the list of authoritative scripture.

Some products of early Christian literary activity must have been lost long before this time; others, owing to their exclusion from the Canon, must have gradually disappeared.

For instance, we have certain knowledge of a letter of St Paul addressed to Corinth, and of another to Laodicea, and, besides, of some gospels whose date indeed cannot be exactly fixed, among which the so-called gospel of the Hebrews was without doubt the most valuable. However, so far as we can judge, the loss is not of considerable importance. Had they come down to us, we should possess some more examples of species of composition which are already well represented; but our general impression of primitive Christian literature would not have been enriched by new essential traits.

As for some ancient Christian writings which are contemporary with the oldest parts of the New Testament, and have been preserved for our knowledge owing to the fact that they were, by the varying usage of some centuries, attached to the New Testament, we can only commend the verdict of the Christians of the second century against their acceptation. There is wanting in them what forms the very

heart of the New Testament scriptures: the strenuous concentration upon what is inward and therefore essential; the "knowledge of nothing but Christ," as St Paul once defines it; the fulness of creative power and of victorious assurance of aim which of itself repells all that is strange and heterogeneous; "the being filled with the Holy Ghost," as later generations felt and named it; finally, the close and intimate connection with that world of religious feeling and practice which finds expression in the Old Testament.

The union of the primitive Christian literature in one book, and the transference to it of the truly mechanical Jewish dogma of Inspiration, early blinded men's eyes and blunted their feelings for the great variety and distinct individuality of the separate works which were now united in one. Still less could there be perceived in these writings a living spirit in full development striving towards yet clearer expression. As it is when men look at some sacred picture, so many traits—and

those often essential traits—of these writings were no longer seen because the gaze fastened only upon that which was most important to the reader. It is now only as the precious reward of most searching analysis and investigation of the writings of the New Testament during the past century that we see these works again living before us in all their individual character. The separate designs disentangle themselves into distinctness, and where once a certain monotony was perceived there now sounds forth a symphony, not without broken harmonies—even discords—with changing, sometimes clashing, themes of independent melody. We no longer see in these writings, by means of more or less unwarranted omissions and forced interpretations, only what is everlastingly valid and true, but from their pages images and characters now stand out before us coloured by all the varied conditions of their times. And all this which lay before past generations uncared for and unnoticed, now interests us and gradually captivates us

as forcibly as the abiding truth which forms the content of these scriptures.

Of course these writings, with all their variety, possess a common property which binds them closely together. They all deal with the same great question, the question of religion; and that in the distinct form given it by the Person and history of Jesus, and by the fact of His acceptance as the Christ in Christian circles. Christ is their life. They all have origin in the same spiritual world whose poles are, so to speak, Jerusalem and Athens, a world in which the Eastern Semitic spirit in the peculiar form of Judaism, and the spirit of Greece in the cosmopolitan form it developed after Alexander had broken down the barriers of the nations, now met in conflict, now came to mutual compromise. And just in so far as this antique world in its customs, its conceptions, its ideals, is far removed from us, so do these writings arouse in us an impression of similarity, just as to a Chinese ear the music

of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, seems to all intents and purposes the same in character.

* * * * *

But our concern in this volume is not with the world of thought revealed in these books, but with the books themselves. We would relate the history of the literature of Early Christianity.

The language employed in this literature is Greek, the universal language of those days. And it is well to bear in mind that the Christians did not create, as was once thought, a peculiar dialect of this language—a New Testament Greek. Nor did they speak and write, as others have believed, in a Jewish-Greek patois. It cannot, of course, fail to be perceived that there is a difference between the Greek of the New Testament and that of other contemporary writers. But this difference does not lie in distinction of dialect. The latter authors, who wrote for a cultured public, endeavoured with more or less success to

imitate, as far as the living development of the Greek tongue still permitted, that epoch of the language which had been consecrated by the classic creations of the Periclean age. The Christian writers, free from all such æsthetic humours and quite absorbed by the burning desire to reach the hearts of their readers, spoke in the living language of their time, in that popular language of conversation and commerce, as it again lives before our eyes in the epistles and commercial records which the sands of Egypt have preserved for the excavator of to-day. It was with them as with Luther, who, when he determined to set forth to his nation a Bible in German, "looked to the stomach of the common people."

It was unavoidable but that the primitive Christian writers often used compulsion with the Greek tongue and offended against its genius. They wished to bring to expression things which, up to that time, were foreign to the Greek spirit and had only found verbal expression in Semitic languages. And besides,

it is only natural that the phraseology of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, to which they were habituated from their youth, should unconsciously flow from their pens, and still more, that when their subject matter brought them into close contact with the Old Testament or when they translated from the Aramaic dialect of Palestine, their Greek should receive a foreign tinge. All this, however, does not give the Greek of the New Testament the character of a peculiar dialect, it only lends to the universal dialect that was employed in these writings a slight colouring which is by no means the same with each author.

For we may draw a strong line of distinction between the New Testament writers according to the measure in which they show themselves masters of the Greek tongue. The best Greek, scarcely different in any point from that of contemporary writers, was written by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, an Alexandrian by education at least, and by the author of the

Lukan writings, who was probably an Ephesian. Somewhat inferior to these in literary purity and genuinely Greek style, but far superior to them in a masterly command of the language, stands Paul the Tarsan. The Greek of those days becomes indeed in his hands the keenest and most flexible instrument of a spirit of boundless power and endowment. In the same measure as we can speak of a language of Bunyan or of Milton, so may we speak of a language of Paul. The smallest amount of linguistic versatility is shown in the Johannine writings, more particularly in the Book of Revelation and in the Epistle of St James.

And as the primitive Christian authors employed the universal dialect of their times, so also they accommodated themselves to contemporary taste in literary form. It was a wide-spread literary custom to set down one's thoughts in form of an epistle, as did St Paul and other Christians after him. Also the collection of Pauline epistles which was, we may say, published by the Christians, has

abundant analogies in the literature of the Augustan and post-Augustan epochs. Again, collections of striking sayings of distinguished men, like those collections of words of Jesus which are worked up in our Gospels, were a well-known phenomenon in the literary world of those days. Moreover the popular biographies of great men current in those days, and written likewise in the first place with an ethical purpose, form an analogy, if a remote one, to the Gospels and the Acts of the New Testament. This similarity was so strongly felt by Justin, the philosopher who had become a Christian, that in an apology for Christianity addressed to the Roman Emperor he even applied to the Gospels the customary title assigned in his days to such biographies—a Greek word corresponding to our word "Memoirs." The Johannine Apocalypse has its parallels in all kinds of esoteric writings and books of vision and prophecy. Finally, it was a favourite practice of rhetoricians and sophists to foster speeches or letters upon great men, especially

renowned philosophers and orators, and in this way to gain for their own ideas patrons of note and authority. Nor was this practice regarded by any one as something dishonourable.

It is, however, important to notice not only the forms which were accepted as models for the literary activity of the first Christians, but also the forms which they did not employ. They wrote no text-books—certainly no dogmatic text-books—no philosophic treatises, no catechism, no statute or code of laws, no formal creed, also no works of imagination in the ordinary sense of the phrase. All that comes from them is the expression of personal experience and conviction the most profound, most sincere, and most sacred.

The period, during which the early Christian writings comprised in the New Testament were composed, certainly does not extend beyond the first three generations. The majority of them were most probably written within the first century of our era. It is impossible to fix exactly the year for each

writing, nor is such knowledge of any essential worth seeing that the exact date would give us no exact picture of the circumstances of the time of composition.

We have knowledge indeed of some crucial epochs in the development of those days without, of course, being able to state with certainty how far they were recognised as such by the Christians of the period. Those which are most ancient and well known are not material to our purpose because they date before the beginning of Christian literature. These are the first origin of Christian communities outside Jerusalem, then outside Palestine; the entrance of Gentiles into the Christian brotherhood; the concession of freedom from the Mosaic Law by the Jewish Christians to the Gentile Christians; the passage of the movement from the Oriental into the Greek world. The times during which these steps were taken were the years of the conflict of the new organism for its existence and for the first stages of its develop-

ment. Such times can spare no leisure for literature, nor could literary effort be of any avail: such times demand action.

The next period is one of more peaceful development upon the ground that had been already won. It is distinctly marked by the death of the leaders St Paul, St Peter, and St James, in the beginning of the seventh decade of the century, and by the destruction, in 70 A.D., of Jerusalem, the cradle and up to this time the centre of the whole movement. These two striking events, which lie fairly near to one another in point of time, mark the close of the primitive epoch—the epoch of the heroes, the epoch of the Apostles as it was afterwards called, the time when the movement was confined within narrower limits. The only New Testament writings which date from this period are the epistles of St Paul and the elements of our Gospels; both forming, of course, the most precious treasures of the whole early Christian literature.

Within the following generation—the epoch

of the disciples of the Apostles, as it was afterwards called—we know of no event which forms a distinct historical landmark.

This epoch again merges imperceptibly into the epoch of the so-called Apostolic Fathers. The only event known to us which marks this period is one connected with the external relations of Christianity—the outbreak of the first systematic and wide-spread persecution of the new religion under Domitian. Here, again, we have no certain knowledge as to the extent of this persecution. However, such an event proves that the eyes of the great world had now begun to watch the movement closely; it brought, moreover, the Christians to clear consciousness of themselves as a separate body now about to play a distinct part upon the stage of history. Their attention was now more forcibly directed to their relationship to society outside, and was less focussed upon the more intimate communal and spiritual questions which concerned themselves alone. This appreciation of the significance of the

persecution of Domitian, which broke out in different provinces of the Roman Empire during the years 92–96 A.D., finds support in the history of early Christian literature; for, if I rightly judge, with this period the literary activity of the Christians starts afresh. At least traces of persecution are wanting in none of the writings of the second generation, and all their authors have a wide outlook over the whole world.

We can also distinguish broadly between the land of origin of the writings of the first and second generation. The authors of the first generation are Orientals. To the literature of the second generation the East makes no further contribution; rather the names Rome and Ephesus mark the home of these writings.

It is possible that all the authors of the New Testament writings were by nationality Jews, though those of the second generation must have been Jews of the dispersion who had grown up under the influence of the

Græco-Roman culture of the Empire. Only in the case of the author of the Lukan writings is it probable that he was a heathen by birth and education, though before he became a Christian he must have been in some measure brought under the influence of Jewish religious ideals.

# I

## ST PAUL

The most striking and impressive character among the early Christian writers is the earliest of them, the Apostle St Paul. One might speak of him as an author, for nothing that is essential to literary eminence was wanting in him, were it not that his personality was far too comprehensive for such a name. He was above all things a man of force, a man of action. His nature drove him into the world of action that he might directly influence it and transform it. He must appeal to the hearts of men, he must throw himself into intimate fellowship with them, he must kindle among them the fire of enthusiasm which burned in his own soul, he must with untiring energy stir up the flame and fan it into a blaze

with the whirlwind of his spirit. Again, he was a man of love. He must see men eye to eye, he must penetrate into the innermost depths of their hearts; he must reach forth his hand to them, and must share with them in intimate communion that whereof the heart was running over; he must raise them from their slough of misery, he must save them. Lastly, he was a man of organisation. He purposed to create something which would stand fast in the storm of evil, to build the spiritual "Temple of God." In all lands he must gather together into a mighty people of God those whom God had predestined thereto. He must prepare the world for the coming of the Lord of Glory and the dawn of a new age. In these aims he must spend and be spent, the slave of his Lord and Master.

But he could not be in all places at one and the same time. And so when he was divided from some field of his labour by long stretches of sea and land, when his heart was moved by yearning for his beloved children, or by

anxiety whether they might not suffer themselves to be led astray, then he would take up his pen, or (speaking more accurately) would call for an amanuensis and would dictate to him the meditations, the thoughts, the plans which moved his spirit and took form within his soul. Now and again he himself may well have first drawn up a short sketch of an epistle. For though many passages of his epistles are like the sudden eruption of a volcano, though in others there breathes the warmth and fragrance of the intimate spontaneous feeling of the moment, though oftentimes thought overtakes and confuses thought like wave upon wave so that there seems no room for both, though many a word is slung forth for which calmer consideration would have chosen a milder accent, still these letters are occasional writings only in the sense in which Goethe's poems can be called occasional writings. They are not creations of the moment, but in composition and expression are the fruit of most earnest thought and of conscious literary art. St

Paul wrote them, just as other writers of his days composed epistles, not only for the readers to which he addressed them, but with the thought of their publication among a much wider circle. Nor did he purpose to give expression to thoughts born of the moment, but to eternal abiding truths. And yet the epistles are not dogmatic treatises. They are intended to be read as letters are read, not verse by verse, not in detached portions, not in sentences torn from their context, but in one connected reading. Each epistle is intended to take effect as a whole.

For work of this kind, Paul was qualified as scarcely another who has used the pen. His eloquence, his lively imagination, his deep and yet clear feeling, the keenness, the abounding wealth, the energy of his spirit, all these made him the creative genius that could form into intellectual concepts and express in words the new spiritual experience which his soul had felt more deeply and keenly than others; these gifts again caused that every

note struck in sympathetic souls found in him an answering echo. His mighty aims, his grand ideals, the self-overpowering impulse of his will, rapt him to heights whereon a man becomes a poet. Nor can we fail to note that one of such strong receptivity was not in vain the child of a brilliant epoch of culture and brought up at one of its chief seats. He also loves, like the authors of his times, that rhythm of style for which his taste had been sharpened by the language of the prophets of his nation. Whole sections of his epistles can be divided into short complete lines, like poetry in prose. He is a master of rhetorical climax. At supreme points his style becomes lyric. He is fond of developing a thesis in the form of a dialogue. He is fond of putting religious statements, and more especially ethical principles, in short epigrammatic shape. He has a predilection for paradox, for enigmatic sentences, such as "When I am weak then am I strong." These are all refinements of style which were generally admired in those days.

Moreover, the well-balanced arrangement of the greater epistles betrays knowledge of, and sure practice in, the rules for the composition of a discourse which were established in the schools of rhetoric.

And yet his strong sense of the sacredness of his mission and of the solemn import of the signs of the times, all telling of a great crisis in the world's history, of the great catastrophe now at hand—this together with the conviction that he stood forth in the service of the Messiah, the Saviour and Judge of the world—preserved St Paul from all parade of rhetoric, from every empty word, from all vain delight in beauty of form and loftiness of tone. With him is to be found no empty pathos, no affected phraseology, no sounding brass, no tinkling cymbal.

And though time has caused large passages of the epistles to become quite alien to the thought of our days, still these letters of the mighty genius, who has left the impress of his spirit upon a new world of thought and feeling,

are, taken as a whole and judged simply from the literary standpoint, splendid achievements of human literature of which we can say, more truly than of the dialogues of Plato and the odes of Pindar, that they never grow old.

### 1. The First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

So far as we can judge from the genuine letters that have come down to us, the literary activity of the great Christian missionary first begins with the entrance of the mission into Hellas, in the restricted sense of the word, which at that time included all the lands bordering on the Ægean Sea. There is, moreover, no reason to suppose that St Paul wrote epistles during his missionary work in the East and in central Asia Minor, seeing that such letters must then have vanished from notice at an early date. With Damascus, where he began his work (Gal. i. 17; Acts ix. 19–25), he never, so far as we know, renewed

his connection. During the following eleven years of activity in Syria and Cilicia (Gal. i. 21), with Antioch as a centre (Acts xi. 26 *f.*), the facilities for travel might well preclude all need for epistolary intercourse. After he had left Syria (Acts xiii. 1 *f.*) he would scarcely have had any motive for writing thither, since, according to Acts xiii. 1, there was in that land no lack of leading men whom it was quite against his principles to address from a distance. And though St Paul during the period of the Greek mission wrote once under especially pressing circumstances to the Galatian communities, we have no reason to suppose that he had already done the same thing once before, and that while the later letter has been preserved the first has vanished. We may therefore assume that the earliest letter of St Paul that has come down to us is also the first that he composed.

This document, addressed by St Paul to the Christian community of the Thessalonians, among all his epistles to various churches has

most strongly the character of a real letter—*i.e.* an unpremeditated outpouring of the heart as distinct from a literary publication in epistolary form for which some considerable period of preparatory thought is required. Thus it is also the shortest of all the letters, and is accordingly placed in the New Testament at the end of the collection of St Paul's ecclesiastical epistles, which are there arranged in order of their length. In a certain sense the most delightful, at all events the least theological of the epistles, it makes the smallest demand upon the intellect of the reader.

This, the first letter composed by the Apostle, is addressed to the Church of Thessalonica—the present Salonica—the most important of the cities visited by him in the province of Macedonia, the first purely Greek province to which he had carried the message of the Gospel. As he writes to these Thessalonians he is absorbed in the thronging memories of his mission among them. The

bright, fresh enthusiasm of the new-born Church is reflected in the picture which the Apostle draws with the love wherewith a mother speaks of her first child. He calls the Thessalonian Church his pride and his joy (ii. 20). He had only lately founded it during a stay counted only by weeks. We know, from the Acts, that he had begun in the Synagogue to preach the Messiah who had appeared in Jesus; that the Jews did not accept his teaching, and expelled him from the Synagogue, while the Gentile clients of the Synagogue showed themselves approving and sympathetic to an astounding degree, and accepted the Gospel, as he says in his letter, amid much persecution and with joy of the Holy Ghost.

The Church was scarcely established when his zeal drove him onwards to Athens and then to Corinth, the centre at that time of the Hellenic world. But he looked backwards with a yearning heart. He felt as if bereft of his children (ii. 17). He must know how

they fare now that they are left to themselves. He had heard, besides, that they were being persecuted by their fellow-countrymen (ii. 14). He wished to hasten to them himself, but it was not permitted him (ii. 18). In his anxiety he sent to them Timotheus, his younger fellow-labourer, although he must thus be left alone in Athens with Silvanus (iii. 1–5). Now Timotheus has brought him good tidings; they persevere in faith, they desire greatly to see him as he also to see them (iii. 6–8). His suspense is over. His heart is full of joy and thankfulness (iii. 9); only the yearning to see them again still remains (iii. 10). He must tell them all these emotions of his soul. And yet although these first three chapters, so full of fervent affection, might seem but the outburst of an overflowing heart, still in writing them the great pastor of souls has his own purpose in view. The words in which he reminds them of the first beginnings of their Church (i. 2–10) are intended to warn and encourage his converts to abide faithful to this their past

history. The sketches he gives of his activity among them (ii. 1–16) are meant to secure his memory from all detraction and slander. And what he says concerning their fellowship and mutual yearning one for another (ii. 17–iii. 12) is intended to knit together this fellowship in bonds, if possible, yet stronger and more intimate. But the greeting itself (iii. 13), which concludes this section of the epistle, hints at many other things which lay upon his heart to say to them. He proceeds, therefore, in a new section (iv. 1–v. 11), which is introduced as a concluding note. He is anxious about full sanctification of life among these Greek converts, especially in the face of the customary immorality and want of honour (iv. 1–8). Next he warns them to earn their bread by honest labour: a warning which was necessary in presence of the enthusiastic spirit of detachment from earthly things wherewith Christians looked forward to the approaching end of the world (iv. 9–12). Then he comforts their hearts concerning deaths which had occurred

in the community, he depicts in the boldest imagery how the dead also will have a share in the glory to come (iv. 13–v. 3). Then playing upon the double meaning of "sleep" and "night," and passing therewith to the thought of those sleeping in unbelief, he depicts his Christian converts as children of light, as watchful veteran soldiers girt with the breastplate of faith and of love and having as helmet the hope of salvation (v. 4–10). With the mention of these three virtues he returns, as it were, to the beginning (i. 3) and concludes this beautiful epistle with one of those strings of short exhortations like glittering diamonds, which he can compose with a master's hand:—

"Admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward all. See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but alway follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice alway; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks. Quench not

the spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil. And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you who will also do it.

"Brethren pray for us, greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.

"The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

No other of St Paul's epistles is in its origin so independent of external circumstances and events as this. In it we see the Apostle give free course to his own true nature. From this epistle we learn what was the essential character of this herald of a new world, what was the inward heart of his gospel; we learn how simple, how grand were the conceptions that formed the sacred shrine round which he gathered men, wearied and satiated in soul, into

a fellowship inspired with hope for the future; we know the glorious truths that occupied his discourse when he was not compelled to guard his glad tidings from misunderstanding or to justify it against objections, but might speak as a father speaks with his children. St Paul, whom we so easily represent to ourselves as a theologian weighed down with profound thought and immersed in controversy, here shows himself in his inmost character of simple noble humanity.

## 2. The Epistles to the Corinthians.

Thessalonica was a provincial town. The epistles to the Corinthians introduce us to a capital city, the metropolis of the Greek life of those days. We take, as it were, our stand upon the bridge that had only lately been built between the East and West of those days, along which passed the commerce, upon which met the nations of the world. Nowhere else in the New Testament are we afforded such an

insight into the scene of spiritual turmoil stirred up at the appearance of the Gospel, into the multitude of burning questions that demanded an answer, into the bitter controversies which required healing, into the struggle of the new spirit towards right and complete development. Moreover, St Paul shows in these epistles so true and so firm a grasp of the whole situation that they become historical authorities of the first rank, the like of which we scarcely possess in the whole range of human literature. They are documents which enable posterity to attain to a living and clear conception of the primitive development of Christianity in the Greek world such as would have been absolutely impossible without them.

Moreover, the personality of the Apostle so stands forth in this stormy scene that it displays itself to us in its complete, even colossal, grandeur and strength. Ever in restless movement, undaunted by difficulty, in continual feud with all that seemed to him wrong, full of vehement passion, he fights with

all the weapons of his gifted nature—only never with dishonour—with keen understanding, with enthusiastic fervour, with cutting irony, with affectionate heart-piercing appeal.

Now he rages with the voice of the storm, again he breathes in gentle whispers; now he paints in bold dashes of colour, again he draws the line sharp and clear; now he strikes his readers to the ground, again he sweeps them away in sympathy with him; now he claims for himself absolute authority, again he wishes only to be the helper of their joy. Yet he has throughout but one aim—the business of his Master, the salvation of the souls of men.

The richest in content and the most important of his letters addressed to Corinth is the epistle to the Corinthians called in our collection "the first," which St Paul wrote in Ephesus during his three years' mission there, and after his foundation of the Corinthian Church during a stay of one and a half years in Corinth. Many circumstances had combined to incite the Apostle to the composition of an

epistle so comprehensive and so general in its address. The letter itself makes this plain for us. In the first place, a case of grievous moral obliquity had occurred in the community, a relapse into the immorality of Corinth which was infamous throughout the whole world. This had occurred in the past, and had come to the ears of the Apostle some time previously. He had at once sent to the community a short letter of sharp rebuke and strict advice—a letter which does not seem to have been preserved by the Corinthians, and has not, therefore, come down to us. Probably a passage inserted in our second epistle to the Corinthians (ii. Cor. vi. 4–vii. 1), a passage which in tone and contents is out of harmony with its present context, is a remnant of the mildest part of this letter. However, in spite of this apostolic remonstrance, the scandal was not dealt with so strictly as St Paul demanded. He was compelled, therefore, to intervene again (1 Cor. v.–vi.) with stern reproach, in order, as he declares, to preserve the purity

of the Temple of God. For, he reminds them in words of denunciation, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you? glorify God therefore in your body" (vi. 19 *f.*). So runs his warning.

Further, he had heard through certain Corinthian Christians belonging to the household of one Chloe who had paid him a visit (i. 11) that the Corinthian Church was in danger of division into opposing sects. "I am of Paul," "I am of Apollos," "I am of Peter," "I am of Christ"—so rang the confused cry of opposing watchwords (i. 17). This meant danger, as St Paul at once recognised and emphasised, not only to the community but to the very existence of Christianity. He therefore, with the most refined spiritual discrimination, deals first with this question (chaps. i.–iv.). The spiritual pride which incites the Corinthian Christians to mutual conflict and quarrel is most effectually abased by later reference to the

scandal which they with one accord suffer to exist in their midst. In impassioned tones, and yet with magnificent clarity of insight, the Apostle combats this characteristically Hellenic love of clique and tendency to hero-worship. "Let no one glory in men," he cries (iii. 21). He deals first with the question as it affects himself personally. "Was Paul crucified for you? Were ye baptised into the name of Paul" (i. 13)? What avails the wisdom of any man? The message of the Cross is ever foolishness in the judgment of man's wisdom (i. 18). But this crucified Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God to all who trust in Him. What eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard neither hath entered into the heart of man—what God hath prepared for those that love Him, this God has now revealed by the Spirit (ii. 9 *f.*). Therefore can no man lay any other foundation than that which is laid—Jesus Christ. Let each take heed what he builds thereon (iii. 10 *f.*). "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or

Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's (iii. 22 *f.*). As for us, let no man account us aught else than ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (iv. 1). These are the noble thoughts which he opposes to the narrow-mindedness of the Corinthian converts.

St Paul had besides heard much else concerning the life of the community, more particularly concerning the conduct of their public gatherings. Here again he refers to reports brought him probably by the three persons mentioned by name in xvi. 15-17, who are, perhaps, the same as those called in i. 11 the people of Chloe. In addition to these verbal reports, a letter asking him questions of all kinds, and conveyed to him perhaps by these same three men, had arrived from the community itself. The object of the second part of his epistle, from chap. vii. onwards, is to answer these questions and at the same time to settle the other matters of which

he had heard. We can only give the heads of this discussion. In the first place he settles the question of marriage, which seems to have been a burning question for many Corinthians. First of all, whether Christians should marry at all (vii. 1–9, 25–38); next, whether marriage ought not to be dissolved when one of the parties to the compact would not become a Christian (10–24). Although in the counsel that St Paul gives in answer to the first query, always under the conviction that the end of the world was near at hand, we miss a full appreciation of the ethical import of marriage, still in his decided rejection of every idea of divorce, and in the reason he gives for his rejection, he shows how highly he thinks of the sanctity and sanctifying power of wedded life. A second question, which is handled at much greater length (chaps. viii.–x.), gives us an inkling of the tremendous breach with customs of social and family life which was the consequence of the acceptance of the new faith. It is the question whether

Christians might eat flesh which had been offered on a heathen altar, and might take part in a heathen sacrificial feast. St Paul allows the first practice, but forbids the second. This whole passage affords a brilliant witness to the lofty principle, the delicacy of feeling and consideration, shown by St Paul in his handling of such questions. It is a typical example of the perfect combination of complete inward freedom with strenuous self-subjection to the conscientious feelings of the brethren. The next section, of still greater length (chaps. xi.–xiv.), deals with various questions concerning the life of the community itself and the relation of its members one to another. Here we are afforded a view, unique in clearness of detail, of a genuine primitive Christian church, the embryo, so to speak, of the whole development of Christianity. St Paul first regulates the conduct and position of women in the public assembly of the Church (xi. 2-16). Then he deals with scandals that had occurred at the

celebrations of the Lord's Supper, and expounds his view of the signification of this rite (xi. 17–34). Finally, he gives a detailed classification and valuation of the various spiritual gifts which manifested themselves in rich abundance at these public assemblies. Here, again, he raises the whole detailed discussion to a higher plane as he confronts this multitude of extraordinary spiritual gifts with love the highest of them all, and sings its praise in a hymn which is indeed the noblest in feeling and expression that has come from the heart of man (chap. xiii.). We must note, moreover, the sobriety of mind with which St Paul restrains within due bounds the extravagant pretensions of those in whom was manifested that strange phenomenon, the so-called speaking with tongues. In the following section (chap. xv.), and from a motive similar to that which moved him in the epistle to the Thessalonians, he gives a long explanation of his views concerning the Resurrection of the dead and eternal life, wherein we gain wondrous glimpses

into the scheme of religious and philosophic thought which the Apostle had constructed for himself out of the ideas of his times. A series of verses relating to personal matters, which give us some idea of the living character of the fellowship which existed between St Paul and his converts, and a greeting written by the Apostle's own hand, bring to a conclusion an epistle which is the most important historical authority for the life and character of the early Christian communities.

There is however one other thing which is brought out into the clearest light by this epistle, and that is the wonderful power St Paul possessed of accommodating himself to others. The man, who yields not one iota of his sincere convictions, who fights like a lion when in his person his apostleship is attacked, who with his whole soul loves his own nation and is thoroughly imbued with the conviction of its superiority as the ancient people of God—this same man, when here brought into contact with Greek life, knows how to feel like a Greek

(*cf.* ix. 24–27) and to enter into Greek ideas with sympathy so wide and so delicate that this letter is the noblest instance of his wide-hearted maxim "to be all things to all men" (ix. 19–22). Here the Hebrew of the Hebrews (Phil. iii. 5) becomes to the Greeks a Greek and yet remains himself.

* * * * *

We know nothing of the effect produced by the letter as regards the two most burning of the questions with which it dealt. Between it and St Paul's correspondence with Corinth, preserved for us in the so-called Second Epistle to the Corinthians, lie various events; but we do not see them all in clear outline and connection. It is supposed by many that St Paul himself had in the meanwhile paid a visit to Corinth, but the passages which are brought forward to support this view (ii. 1; xiii. 1 *f.*; i. 23, 16) are by no means convincing, nor is there any other testimony that such a visit ever took place. On the other hand it is certain that St Paul, moved by some

occurrence of which he had heard and which grieved him most bitterly, addressed a letter to Corinth (ii. 4–9) while he was still at Ephesus. It was sent by the hands of Titus, one of his missionary comrades, while the Apostle himself under these circumstances postponed for a time the visit to Corinth which he had long purposed to make (i. 15 *f.*; i. 23–ii. 3). In the meantime he had been compelled to leave Ephesus (i. 8–11). He had reached Troas, and tortured by anxiety had continued his journey towards Macedonia to meet Titus (ii. 12 *f.*; vii. 5). There he found his messenger, who was able to impart to him the joyful news of the complete success of his mission. In an ecstasy of happiness St Paul at once writes to the Corinthians the letter which lies before us, in which—at least as far as chapter ix., with chapter xiii. 11–13 as conclusion—traces only of the trouble that had past appear like distant flashes of lightning when the storm has gone by and left the sky serene (i. 17 *f.*; ii. 6–8, 17; iii. 1–7; ii. 14). Titus again is the messenger,

and as a sign of the mutual confidence now re-established he is commanded to bring to a conclusion the collection of alms for the Christians of Jerusalem, already referred to in 1 Cor. xvi. 1–4. This matter is again discussed in a tone of incomparable nobility in chapters viii.–ix. The preceding portion, chaps. i.–vii., forming the letter proper, is wanting in clear arrangement. In close similarity to the first section of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (chaps. i.–iii.) it is a continual ebb and flow of feelings and thoughts round the theme of the complete and comprehensive vindication of the apostolic mission of the writer, a theme which again and again makes its appearance in the epistle (i. 12–14). After the introduction (i.–ii.), wherein the Apostle gives free rein to expression of joy and to the memory of the events of the near past, the epistle may be divided into three sections according to the general trend of thought in each: (1) The justification of his preaching (iii. 1–iv. 6); (2) The justification of his heavy misfortunes

(iv. 7–v. 10); (3) The justification of his course of action (v. 11–vi. 10); then follows the conclusion (xiii. 11–13), like a rainbow of peace over the whole, forming perhaps the most beautiful of all those final greetings with which St Paul concludes his epistles.

In this epistle we view the mighty personality of the Apostle in continual movement, illuminated by sudden flashes of light and ever from a new standpoint. We feel the quick beating of his heart. It is as though his voice trembles with emotion as he speaks. We learn all the secrets of that storm-tossed soul—what depresses it to despondency, what elevates it with joy, what brings to it the blessing of peace. This letter is the richest of all in personal confession, which often proceeds from unfathomable depths of the soul. The Apostle has here left a memorial of himself in which his personality stands forth clearly before our very eyes.

* * * * *

But have we really lost the pre-

vious letter sent to Corinth with Titus? According to St Paul's own confession, this letter, written with passion and sternness, must have given great pain to its readers. This, however, was the result intended (ii. 4–6; vii. 8–10). Now that his purpose is attained the Apostle formally retracts the tone of this letter (ii. 10; vii. 7–12). It may be shown with the highest degree of probability that this letter has come down to us in 2 Cor. x. 1–xiii. 10). This passage agrees neither in form nor in content with the nine chapters which precede it. Throughout these the whole tone is restful, and St Paul, though deeply moved, is in a gentler mood. Here he is stirred with emotion quite bitter in its intensity. There is war between himself and the Corinthian community. He defends himself with the strongest weapons against grievous, insulting charges. These charges proceed from definite personages, whom he combats with the most reckless disclosure of their follies. They are Jews by birth, who, setting themselves up for

apostles, have thrust themselves into St Paul's field of apostolic labour (xi. 22. 5; xii. 11; x. 13–16). They boast of their personal prerogatives and their successes (x. 12 *f.*, 15 *f.*; xi. 18, 22 *f.*). St Paul, however, calls them false apostles, even ministers of Satan (xi. 13–15, 3). He reproaches them with pulling down instead of building up (x. 3; xiii. 10). We are not clearly told wherein they found authority for their action; not even whether they appealed to the original apostles—certainly not that they claimed personal knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth. But their intention is clear. They bring, as St Paul says, another Gospel, they preach another Jesus (xi. 3 *f.*). They boast of themselves as Christians in a peculiar sense (x. 7). Although they say nothing of circumcision, of the Sabbath, of rules concerning meats, yet it is unmistakable that their aims lie in this direction. As the principal means for attaining their end they employ calumny against the person of St Paul. He is rude in speech (xi. 6; x. 10), weak when he is present,

bold only at a distance—only in his letters (x. 9 *f.*, 1–4; xi. 21). His sufferings, his weak health are brought up against him (xii. 7 *f.*). In his refusal of the means of support they see an admission that he did not feel secure in his apostolic claims (xi. 1–2, 7; xii. 13–16). Suspicion is even thrown upon his motives in making the collection for the Christians of Jerusalem. Nor did the calumniators meet with slight success. St Paul's authority began to waver, the loving memory of him in the heart of his converts becomes overcast by suspicions. The Corinthians submit themselves to the domination and to the cupidity of these people (xi. 20, 3 *f.*). With St Paul, it was a fight for life or death as the father of the Church of Corinth. Therefore he has no mercy with his opponents as he remorselessly brings into play the sharpest weapons of his rhetoric. But he also discloses to them the innermost secrets of his heart, and so upon the raging battlefield there arises in this epistle before our very eyes a noble and a sacred temple. Here also there is no attempt

at exact arrangement of thought. Indeed, the emotion of the Apostle would have broken through all such limitations. However, we may say that the first part of the letter (x. 1–xii. 18) chiefly aims at the defence of the Apostle's personal position, while the second part (xii. 19–xiii. 10) aims at stirring up and sharpening the conscience of the Corinthians.

That the Apostle, after his proclamation of peace in chaps. i.–ix., should deliver yet again a challenge to the same conflict—that the same Paul, whose heart in these chapters is overflowing with joy, should still be so full of bitterness—seems impossible, and the more so when we consider that the tone and contents of the last four chapters exactly suit that letter whose complete success brought to St Paul the heartfelt happiness spoken of in 2 Cor. i.–ix. Indeed the remarks of chaps. i.–ix., in which we trace, as it were, the final quivering of a stress of soul which is now to be forgotten (v. 13; iii. 1; v. 12; i. 12, 17; iv. 3; iv. 7 *ff.*; vi. 44 *ff.*), can only be properly interpreted from chaps.

x.–xiii., and appear in their right light only if this clearer and more definite treatment of the points at issue had preceded them. And the notice (2 Cor. viii. 6), from which we learn that Titus had already once before been entrusted with the supervision of the collection of alms in Corinth, is such as to make the true connection of events still clearer. This visit of Titus must have preceded his despatch with the stern letter (2 Cor. x.–xiii.). Indeed, it was probably Titus' activity in setting forward the collection of the money that gave the Jewish Christians courage to stir up ill-feeling against St Paul. Titus discontinued the collection and returned to Ephesus, only to be sent back again by the indignant Apostle with the letter of stern rebuke (2 Cor. x. 1–xiii. 10). That he should be entrusted a second time, after peace had been restored, with the business of the collection, meant also for himself a kind of rehabilitation. One thing only remains obscure—whether Titus was sent the first time to Corinth in place of or after Timothy, who (1 Cor. xvi. 10*f.*) seems

to have been intended for this work. That this letter, the shortest of the three, though in chronological order it stands second, should in our collection of the Corinthian correspondence take the last place, is only natural; nor is it hard to understand that if, as is probable, both address and conclusion were wanting from the first, it should gradually fall into place before the conclusion of the preceding epistle. We shall indeed see later that in all probability the latter phenomenon repeats itself in similar fashion once again in the history of the Pauline epistles.

At all events this short letter x.–xiii. is first seen in its right light only when it is kept apart from chaps. i.–ix., wherein the tone is so much more restful and harmonious. St Paul here appears before us as a giant who launches the thunderbolt, and is first revealed in his complete volcanic nature in the storm which gathers and spends its force around him. We may, moreover, conclude from the record of the Acts of the Apostles (xx. 2)—according to which St

Paul was yet again in Corinth during the journey through his Greek churches which preceded his visit to Jerusalem—that his relations of friendship with this most important Greek community were not again disturbed.

### 3. The Epistle to the Galatians.

We possess two other letters dating from the period of St Paul's missionary labours, the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Romans. These two epistles, as distinguished from those we have already dealt with, have much in common. They are both addressed, not to communities of Greek race, but to Greek-speaking members of non-Hellenic nationalities which were more or less influenced by Greek civilisation. This however is only an accidental and external point of similarity, although it was probably not quite without its influence upon the author as he wrote. It is more important to notice that in both cases St Paul is compelled to come to

conclusions with Judaism as the fountain-head of the Christian religion, and is accordingly led to trains of thought, methods of proof, and points of view which we do not meet with in the former epistles. Both writings therefore have a strongly theological character. Those personal touches, which reveal to us the Apostle and his readers and have hitherto formed the peculiar attraction of the epistles, now fall into the background. The philosopher, the dialectician in St Paul, now supplants the man. And the fact that this philosopher has passed through the Rabbinic schools, and is in his mode of thought still a Jewish scribe, does not bring him nearer in sympathy to us, however much we may have occasion to wonder at the clearness of thought, the inexorable logic, the close reasoning with which St Paul can expound and establish his views. Such impressions, however, ought not to lead us to see in him only a man of system and dogma; a life of outward and inward conflict, and his own strong, active nature,

prevented him from being this only. It is certain that he assigned no value to dogmatic theology. We cannot decide whether, in the dogmatic statements which he occasionally formulates in these epistles, he believes that he is giving an exact expression of Christian experience valid for all time, or whether he has in his eye only a particular case, perhaps only his own personal experience, and thinks that he can in these forms most clearly represent to himself the essence of Christianity. Seeing that some arguments are repeated in quite similar terms in each of the two epistles, we may certainly assume that the Apostle had already given them this form in his public teaching before the composition of these letters.

The external data for the epistle to the Galatians cannot be determined with certainty, and are yet not without interest. Agreement has not been reached even in regard to the persons to whom the letter was addressed. The origin of the name Galatians is of course

undisputed. It denotes certain Celtic or Gallic tribes which had been driven by Romans from their home in Southern Gaul or Northern Italy, and wandering eastwards had become (about 270 B.C.) the terror of Asia Minor, and had at last settled in the interior of that peninsula. Here, thanks to their gradual acceptance of Greek civilisation, they had created a flourishing league of cities, which continually increased in extent and power through the acquisition of surrounding tracts of country. But what did the name Galatians denote now in the time of St Paul? That it included the descendants of these tribes is obvious. But the name must have had a far wider connotation even before the time of St Paul. Even during the period of the Galatian city league, in the course of the last century before Christ, the Romans had continually given to the Galatians —their allies—portions of those states of Asia Minor which they overwhelmed in course of their conquests; while since 36 B.C., Amyntas —whose career was in many points parallel to

that of Herod of Palestine, and who had obtained from the Romans the title and authority of King of Galatia—had been able to extend the boundary of his kingdom southward to the Mediterranean and eastward to Cilicia. The name Galatia during this period naturally included all these territories, and their inhabitants irrespective of race would be called Galatians. This nomenclature must have become more firmly established after the death of Amyntas, when Augustus made his kingdom a Roman province under the name Galatia. There can therefore be no doubt that St Paul was justified in including the inhabitants of those southern territories of Central Asia Minor, Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Pamphylia, under the name 'Galatians.' This is indeed the more probable in that St Paul shows a preference for the use of the Roman provincial name of a country; for example: Asia (Rom. xvi. 5), Macedonia (1 Cor. xvi. 5), Achaia (1 Thess. i. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 15; Rom. xv. 26), Syria and Cilicia (Gal. i. 21); and in that the Acts

of the Apostles gives us at least no distinct information of a mission in Galatia proper (*cf.* xvi. 1–5; xviii. 23). A further ground for the supposition that the Galatians of the epistles are the converts of Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Pamphylia mentioned in the Acts, is to be derived from the composition of the band of disciples which, according to Acts xx. 4, accompanied St Paul on his journey to Jerusalem with the alms of the communities. Among these there must have been representatives from Galatia, since the Galatians had taken active interest in the collection (1 Cor. xvi. 1). These representatives can therefore only have been Gaius of Derbe and Timothy of Lystra, *i.e.* natives of towns which are situated in the countries that we have just mentioned. Moreover, it is evidently presupposed, in Gal. ii. 1, that St Barnabas was known in Galatia and that as a companion of St Paul; this suggests the conjecture that he had preached there with St Paul, a circumstance which, so far as tradition goes, is true only of the countries named.

Hence it may well be that our epistle was addressed to the first Christian converts of Asia Minor which St Paul had gained outside his own home provinces of Syria, Cilicia, and Cyprus.

Nor can it be determined with certainty when St Paul wrote to these Galatians. Since he speaks clearly only of a second previous visit (iv. 13), the epistle may have been written before his third visit to those regions mentioned in Acts xviii. 23—*i.e.* during his mission in Corinth. In this case, our epistle is older than the epistles to the Corinthians. Nothing, however, excludes the supposition that this third journey through Galatian territory might have preceded the despatch of the epistle, if on this occasion St Paul only visited those communities which had been omitted during his former second passage through their land. In this case the letter was written from Ephesus, and would be about contemporary with the epistles to Corinth, lying probably between the first and the second epistle. This question is,

however, without import for the appreciation of the epistle; for it is occupied only with the circumstances of the Galatian communities, which fill St Paul with such anxiety that he has not a word to spare for his own affairs.

The epistle leaves us in no doubt as to what had happened. Jews had crept into the community. Definite personages are quite distinctly alluded to in the passages i. 7 and v. 10–12. They had unsettled the Galatian Christians and made them rebellious against that which had been hitherto preached to them. They assert that the Galatians have halted half way in that they were only baptised; he that wishes to be a Christian must become a Jew—that is, must take upon him the sign of the covenant, must observe Sabbath and feast-day, and keep the Law, at least its chief commands (v. 2; iv. 10; iii. 2–5). They allege that it was only in craftiness and desire for popularity (i. 10) that Paul had withheld this knowledge from them and had thus shown himself to be no true friend of theirs (iv. 16).

This Paul was no true apostle as were the original apostles, to whose authority these intruders into Galatia evidently appealed. As in Corinth, St Paul's zeal and energy are exploited to stir up ill-feeling against him (iv. 16–20). With an appearance of justice they could point to moral delinquencies in the communities as the result of that freedom from the Law which was proclaimed by St Paul (v. 13 *f.*).

The motives that inspired the action of these people may well have been manifold in character—they may have been sincerely convinced of the indispensability of the Law and of the inalienable privileges of the Jewish people; but also, as is shown in vi. 12 *f.*, they may have hoped to moderate the enmity of the Jews against Christianity by leading as many Gentiles as possible over the bridge of the Christian religion into the fold of Judaism. In the latter case, the intruders could well have been sincere Jewish Christians: yet they might also have been Jews who pretended to be

Christians. Nor is it clear whether their final object was to make the Galatian Christians Jews or only Jewish Christians.

The success of this proselytism was as yet not great. Naturally enough the Galatians were most readily inclined to receive and to observe the feast-days. An attempt was made to decoy them on by asserting that they need not observe all the commands of the Law (v. 3). But they had not fallen into the net; they still stood hesitating before the principal requirements of the proselytisers (i. 7; iii. 3; iv. 9, 21; v. 10). Nevertheless St Paul is in the greatest anxiety (iii. 4; iv. 11, 19), for there was in those lands a strong settlement of the Jewish dispersion which could easily devour the small Christian communities and thereby add to its own strength. All the results of his first missionary journey were at stake; yet not only these, as St Paul recognises most clearly, but the truth of the Gospel (ii. 5), Christendom itself, so far as it was to be a new independent society. Accordingly,

all the arguments of this epistle are marked by the most extreme rigour and firmness of principle. On all sides he establishes and confirms that conception of the Gospel, which he had proclaimed and which he calls his own gospel (i. 8, 11 ; ii. 2). The letter is somewhat concise in style. All personal notices, messages, greetings, are wanting. There is no introduction of any kind. St Paul rushes straight into the midst of things. Even the address grows under his hand into a short summary of his gospel (i. 1–5). The close phalanx of his reasoning is broken only by impassioned questions and reproaches—"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" (iii. 1 ; iv. 19) ; or by mournful reminiscences of the enthusiastic hospitality with which they had once received him (iv. 13–16).

The train of thought in this epistle is closely knit. First we have the expanded address in which St Paul calls himself an "apostle not from men, neither through man, but through

Jesus Christ and God the Father who hath raised Him from the dead" (i. 1), and associates himself in sending the epistle with the brethren who were with him (i. 2). Then follows a short passage (i. 6–10) in which, with extreme sharpness of tone, the situation is clearly stated. In the first part of the body of the epistle (i. 11–ii. 21), in the form of a narrative of his past history from his conversion onwards, he makes clear his position in regard to Judaism and Jewish Christianity. Then follow (iii. 1–iv. 11) two passages of scriptural exegesis, in the first of which he refutes the position of his opponents, while in the second he justifies his own. This whole section bears clearly the stamp of the Jewish schools of letter-worship and allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament, wherein the intellectual gymnastics of scribe and rabbi were quite in accordance with the taste of the Synagogue. Now comes a third section (iv. 12–v. 12), containing a pathetic appeal to the Galatians to order their behaviour in accordance with what has been declared to

them. In a fourth section (v. 13–vi. 10) the Apostle, passing from polemics to positive teaching, paints in glowing colours the true Christian way of living which is based upon freedom of spirit in deliverance from the yoke of the Law—here again we have one of the jewels of the literary art of St Paul. Finally, he himself takes up the pen. As in the expanded address so now he is driven to write the weighty, forcible sentences which intervene before the customary final greeting of vi. 18. With a touching jest upon his hand-writing, he begins: "See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand." Then he writes down with these large letters his bitter accusation against those who were disturbing the community. They desire only to reap glory for themselves and to escape persecution for the Cross of Christ. "But as for me," the words well up from the very deep of his soul, "far be it from me that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world hath

been crucified unto me and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule peace be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear branded upon my body the marks of Jesus." The most touching, most moving cry of a life of suffering and yet of peace!

While reading this letter one constantly feels that St Paul at this crisis of his mission first arrived at a clear, comprehensive view of the complete incompatibility of the Gospel with the religion of the Law. If up to this time he had regarded the Law only as dispensable, he now recognises the complete and essential opposition of the religion of faith and grace to every form of legal religion. The "offence of the Cross," so it becomes clear to him, is to be simply accepted. The Cross first gains for him its complete significance and justification when he is assured that the Law was intended only to bring consciousness of sins, that it even

tends to the multiplication of transgressions, and that it must thus under all circumstances be abolished now that Christ has made atonement for sins and has imparted the Spirit to mankind. Only those therefore are Christians who make a complete breach with all idea of merit gained through the works of the Law, and trust themselves absolutely to the grace of God offered to them in Christ. Hence our epistle is the charter of Christianity as a new, a universal religion. She here finally shakes off the shell of Judaism, and starts upon her free progress among the nations of the world. Never has St Paul emphasised so sharply as in this letter that characteristic which forms the essence of Christianity; never has he so clearly taught that herein all is inward and spiritual and therefore free, that the soul of man stands to God in a direct relationship in which God freely gives to the man who, trusting in Him, accepts the gift without thought or hope of deserving it. Our epistle is also important in another twofold aspect. In the first

place it affords us a glimpse into the rabbinic scholarship of St Paul; even as a Christian we find that he holds fast to its conceptions and methods. Secondly, in its first two chapters, this letter forms the only perfectly trustworthy authority for the early history of St Paul and the origins of Christianity, more particularly for the inward history of the development of the conflict with that Judaism upon whose soil the new religion had grown up.

### 4. The Epistle to the Romans.

The most characteristic of the letters composed by St Paul is that which was sent to the Christians of Rome. Long passages of it may be regarded rather as theological argument thrown into the form of a letter. Nevertheless this form is not mere literary apparel; on the contrary, the character of the readers and the personal situation of the author are the cause that the epistle partly assumes the tone and shape of a treatise.

St Paul has come to the end of his mission in the countries of Greek speech. He has spread the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum (xv. 19). His eye now travels over the Western Latin world and naturally fixes its gaze first of all upon Rome, the metropolis of civilisation. New tasks and problems of infinite range are presented by this new world so absolutely alien in character to himself.

Christianity could only take its proper place in universal history after it had established a firm footing in the city which ruled the world —its whole future development depended upon the form it took in Rome. Already however it had found converts in that city. Thither this new message, like everything else which sprang up anywhere in the world of those days, had been brought by the winds, of which no one can say whence they come. Indeed, at the time St Paul wrote this epistle, this Christian community in Rome, of unknown origin, had met with all kinds of vicissitudes of fortune. According to Suetonius,

the Roman Emperor Claudius banished from Rome Jews who were in tumult *impulsore Chresto*, probably therefore Jewish Christians and their most bitter opponents. After the dispersion of this first Christian community of Jewish origin, probably about the beginning of the sixth decade of the first century, Christianity must have taken fresh root in Rome; and again we know not whence the seed came, only that judging from our epistle the new foundation was independent of the Synagogue. It was of the utmost importance to St Paul that this community, the product of accident and yet appointed to be the embryo of the Western Christendom of the future, should possess Christianity in the form which, as his own feeling and experience taught him ever more clearly, alone corresponded to its inward truth.

The Apostle evidently does not know much concerning the state of the community, at all events he has no personal relations with it; moreover, his personality, though not unknown

in Rome—a proof of the fame which his work and its success had brought him—has not become a centre of controversy there. This circumstance is favourable to his undertaking; he could speak the more impartially, with the greater objectivity. But, on the other hand, there was this difficulty in the way of his intention to proclaim his gospel to the Roman Church—namely, that such a course of action seemed to conflict with his principle never to build upon another's foundation. This was one more reason why he should keep his own personality in the background and allow things to speak for themselves, but it at the same time affords us an opportunity of admiring the tactfulness with which the Apostle at the beginning and end of the epistle justifies his action, even apologises for thinking of sending these lines to a community over which he had no personal authority—a delicacy of feeling which is doubly praiseworthy in a man of such energy and zeal. In the address he describes himself to them as a bond-servant of Jesus

Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God (i. 1), and declares that to him with many others, through his Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of this apostleship was given to promote obedience of faith among all nations for His name's sake, among whom are they also the called of the same Jesus Christ (i. 5*f.*). He is indeed debtor to Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish (i. 14). And so already for a long time he had purposed to preach the Gospel in Rome also (i. 15). Now after that they had already received the good news, it is his intense desire at least to establish them in faith and to be himself established by them (i. 11*f.*). At still greater length, at the close of the epistle (xv. 14–33), he justifies his action in writing to them. "I myself am persuaded of you, my brethren," says he, "that ye yourselves also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. I have, however, the more boldly written unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance

because of the grace that was given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (xv. 14 *ff.*). He assures them that he does not wish to work among them as a missionary, but only from them to pass on to Spain, because in the regions in which he now found himself there remained no longer a sphere of work for him. He hopes, however, to see them on his journey, and to be forwarded on his way thitherward by their counsel, their help, and their blessing (xv. 23*f.*, 28*f.*). But before this plan could be realised there lies before him a difficult and dangerous undertaking. He wishes to take up to the Christians in Jerusalem the alms which had been collected in the communities he had hitherto founded, and he is not without anxiety as to what might happen to him in Jerusalem (xv. 25–27, 30 *f.*). Thus this letter addressed to the metropolitan city of the world grows, as it were, under his hand into

his testament to Christendom. And really this epistle was the last word which the great missionary wrote to his Christian brethren in full freedom and while actively employed in his mission. If we think at the same time of the bitter conflicts which had been lately forced upon him in Corinth and Galatia, we may expect to find in this writing the final resultant of the trains of thought aroused by these conflicts, and we cannot wonder that the absolute separation of Christianity from the Jewish religion lies in the forefront of his mind as the great task of the future. It is thus an altogether unique situation out of which our epistle has grown. On the other hand, the place of writing is a matter of no importance. In determining this question we must not, as we shall see, use chap. xvi. 1–20 as an authority, nor do the greetings of xvi. 21–23 give us any help; judging, however, from the list of stations in the journey to Jerusalem, given in Acts xx. 1 *ff.*, we may conjecture with great probability that the

epistle was written at Corinth, because it is expressly stated that in Greece alone was his stay sufficiently long to afford him leisure for the composition of a work in which every word is weighed. Besides, we learn from Rom. xvi. 23 of a certain Gaius among those who send greetings; while in 1 Cor. i. 14 we find mention made of a man of the same name, one of the few baptised by St Paul himself, and therefore, as we may conjecture, a close friend of the Apostle and a man of note in Corinth. In our epistle St Paul praises him as "my host and of the whole Church." These greetings, moreover, were certainly intended by St Paul to create bonds of fellowship between the Pauline Christians and the Roman community, and to show that he had not written to them quite exclusively in his own name.

The peculiar theme of the epistle is doubtless, as has been already shown, the relation of Christianity to Judaism: it was the problem of the day for every one who was brought under the influence of this new religious

movement that had sprung from the womb of Judaism—for every one at least who was at all inclined to reflection. And even the unreflecting were compelled to face the problem by the jealous assaults and importunate allurements of the Jews, who everywhere followed close upon the steps of the Christian mission. The epistle, indeed, gives us not the slightest hint that the Roman Christians had had such an experience, much less that they were in any danger whatever of accepting Judaism, or even that differing attitudes adopted towards Jewish legal ordinances had brought about schism in their midst. St Paul always addresses himself to the whole body of believers in Rome, and he never combats any sectional tendency among them which he is convinced to be wrong. The mode of address which the Apostle employs in the beginning (i. 5*f.*, 13), again at the conclusion (xv. 14–16), and in many other parts of the epistle, shows plainly that the great majority in the community consisted of Gentiles, and that any

Jews by birth associated with them played no leading part in the Roman Church or at least made no attempt to give effect therein to Jewish religious ideas. The letter does not attack Jewish Christianity, but Judaism—the Israelitish religion—standing over against Christianity as a distinct independent entity which casts its shadow over the path of the new religion. St Paul presupposes that all the Christians of Rome are disturbed by the perplexing problem that the Gospel which they accepted should have proceeded from the Jews, should rest upon the authority of their holy writings, and yet should have nothing to do with the Jewish Law and should have been rejected by these Jews themselves. And though the Apostle handles this burning question—one that weighed upon the faith and conscience of every thinking man—in the form of a dialogue, though he formulates objections in order to refute them, we must not imagine that persons pressing such objections really existed in the Roman

Church; St Paul simply adopts the customary style for such discussions, a style which was especially in accord with the lively genius of one so disposed to dialectic development of his thought.

Many an argument and method of proof, many a succession of quotations from Scripture as they are met with in this epistle, had no doubt for a long time been employed by the Apostle in his missionary discourses. Many an objection to which he lends words had already been somewhere used against him in the form here given to it. And yet this letter is in a higher degree than any other the unmistakable result of long, intense, and most detailed mental labour. This is shown in the careful balancing of every particular clause and word as well as in the magnificent structure of the whole composition. After the address, in which he briefly characterises his gospel and his mission (i. 1–7), the epistle, as if occupied with the justification of its direction to a community unknown to the Apostle, begins

(i. 8–15) with a passage containing short expressions of hearty regard, and concludes in the same tone but at greater length with a series of details of personal information (xv. 14–33). The intervening portion of the epistle falls into two main divisions—i. 16–xi. 36, and xii. 1–xv. 13. The second of these comprises a sketch of the Christian Life which is absolutely masterly in arrangement and expression. First we have a description of the principle of the new Life (xii. 1 *f.*); then the rules which should govern the behaviour of Christians one towards another (xii. 3–16); next, rules which deal with their relation to non-Christians (xii. 17–21); finally, a statement of their proper attitude towards the civil power (xiii. 1–7): three sides of Christian duty which are beautifully summed up (xiii. 8–10) in the injunctions "Owe no man anything save to love one another," "Love is the fulfilment of the Law," and reinforced by the thought of the near coming of the Lord (xiii. 11–14). As an

appendix there now follows the discussion of a definite practical difficulty, the only one of the sort which is mentioned in the epistle, forming the only testimony that the Apostle had received any detailed information concerning the life of the Roman community (xiv. 1–xv. 13). It deals with the scruples of many brethren in partaking of certain meats, and is closely connected with 1 Cor. viii.–x. As St Paul does not upon this occasion lead up to the question of the validity for Christians of Jewish legal ordinances, we may be sure that he is not here dealing with scruples which are based upon the Jewish law concerning meats, since this law never forbade flesh and commended vegetable food, as the scrupulous brethren in Rome seem to have done (xiv. 2). Rather, the foundation of these scruples is to be discovered in the fact that flesh and wine were consecrated at the heathen sacrificial feasts, or in certain ascetic ideas such as were widely disseminated at that time even in heathen soil. Again the Apostle reveals the

grandeur and freedom of his spirit in the discussion of such questions. In the abstract the strong, as he calls them, those who are oppressed by no scruples, are in the right; he counts himself of their number. But the highest point of view for the Christian must be that of consideration for the sensitive conscience of the weak, which under all circumstances claims his forbearance and regard.

This is all of the highest value for our understanding of the Christianity of the Apostle; but it is not this that lends to the Epistle to the Romans its peculiar significance. It was not this which constrained the Apostle to write. Indeed, the far greater extent of the first part, chaps. i.–xi., shows what was his main purpose in writing the epistle. This portion again falls into two unequal divisions, chaps. i.–viii. and ix.–xi. In the first the nature, in the second the history, we may say, of the Gospel is expounded. The subject of the first division is handled in two sections, of

which the first, i.–v., discusses what God has done, while the second, vi.–viii., treats of what man must do. In the first the largest room is taken up by a description, in the gloomiest colours, of the development of sin regarded as the result of the judgment of the wrath of God, and of the irretrievable corruption of the world. This conviction of universal reprobation, the result of all the Apostle's observation of the brilliant world of culture of his day (i. 17–iii. 8), seeing that its comprehensive condemnation of Jews as well as Gentiles rendered it beyond belief, is proved at length from the Holy Scripture of the Jews (iii. 9–20). Then in iii. 21–v. 11 it is shown how God has revealed salvation to this lost world through Messiah and His submission to death (iii. 21–31), and that man need only trustfully accept this proof of God's grace. Here, again, this astounding statement is shown to be true from the scriptural history of Abraham, for even with the patriarch righteousness before God depended not on works but on trustful

faith (iv. 1–22). In both arguments it is expressly emphasised that they affect, to a quite equal extent, Jews as well as Gentiles, that they are true for men as such without any distinction. The concluding verses of the section impress the seal of history upon this statement. This is indeed the primary purpose of that ingenious comparison of the original father of mankind with the Head of Christendom, though its force depends, of course, upon ideas current in the Jewish theological schools (v. 12–21).

The second part, chaps. vi.–viii., cannot be so surely analysed. Most probably it falls at first into two longish divisions. The former of these, vi. 1–vii. 6, clearly sets forth what should be the behaviour of those who believe in this Divine grace. In the first place, a refutation is given of the false deduction that a man may sin seeing that grace thus abounds; and secondly, the right deduction is declared, namely, that the man who is justified can only live unto righteousness. The demonstration

that the new relationship to God involves freedom from every law (vii. 1–6) forms the transition to the second division. This second division (vii. 7–viii. 11) deals with the question—What significance is then to be attributed to the Law which assuredly comes from God, and thus to the Jewish religion in the religious development of mankind? First it is shown (vii. 7–25) that the Law served a preparatory and temporary object; next (viii. 1–11), that it is now superseded. Then as a conclusion from both these two subdivisions there follows the description of the indwelling of the Spirit in the Christian and of the pledge of future perfection thereby afforded him (viii. 12–30)—again one of the lofty heights of Pauline teaching. Finally, all these demonstrations of the nature of Christianity culminate in a grand hymn upon the bliss, the firm confidence in ultimate victory, brought to the heart by faith in Christ (viii. 31–39).

But still nothing has been said concerning that difficult historical problem which must

have lain as a heavy burden upon the faith of the Gentile Christians—Why is it that the Jews, from whom Christianity proceeds, have not become Christians? St Paul gives the solution of this enigma in chaps. ix.–xi. He begins with a full recognition of the favoured position of the people of Israel and of their historical priority in regard to the Gospel of Christ. Then in accordance with his own theological preconceptions he endeavours to explain the patent fact of the unbelief of the ancient people of God, first from the point of view of the Divine foreordaining and all-embracing Providence (ix. 6–29), next from the side of Israel itself (ix. 30–x. 21). But the real solution of the mystery is first given in a comprehensive explanation of the Divine plan of salvation (xi. 1–36). Israel, indeed, is not finally cast away (1–10); it must, however, make place for the Gentiles (11–25): when these have entered the kingdom then Israel itself will believe (25–36). Here also the argument

culminates in that famous hymn of praise: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out!"

What was the Apostle's purpose in these detailed investigations? They are much too full of life to have sprung only from his own need of rendering a clear and comprehensive account to himself of the relationship of the two religions as he conceived and taught it. How, moreover, could one so eaten up by restless zeal have ever harboured such a purpose much less have found time and inclination to carry it out? It is just as clear that these investigations cannot have aimed at combating any propensity in the Roman community towards amalgamating faith in Christ with the observance of the Jewish Law. For such amalgamation is not the object of attack in this epistle; but Judaism, the relation of its Law and the attitude of its professors toward the faith in Christ, is the mysterious

phenomenon which is to be explained. Must not this Roman Church in the course of its spontaneous independent development—must not, indeed, all Gentile converts to the Gospel have been sorely oppressed by the doubt continually awakened in the soul by such questions as these:—Why have the Jews not accepted this Christ of ours? Why is there such bitter opposition between two religions so nearly allied? Why does this preparatory phase still abide if it is now superseded? And behind them all the question:—May not the Jews, the adherents of the more ancient faith, be in the right? Does not the step we have taken in recognising the Christ naturally lead to the further step of accepting the Law?

In answer to such questions St Paul would show that the new religion is absolutely and essentially distinct from the religion out of which it has grown, that it is really a new religion. Here was matter for no mere play of ingenious intellectual subtilty, it was a

burning problem whose solution was a question of life and death for the new religion. By means of the Apostle's demonstration Christianity is to be freed from all fetters, set upon her own feet, and established in firm assured conviction of her Divine mission. The occasion of his writing lies in the critical historical situation which had been revealed to the Apostle in a sufficiently glaring light by his experiences in Galatia, Corinth, and no doubt also in Ephesus, though we have no exact knowledge of his experience in the latter place. And so, before he starts for Jerusalem, he directs to Rome the charter for the new religion which he had spread abroad in the Gentile world for now quarter of a century, he renders Christianity capable of becoming a universal religion. Therefore it is that in no other epistle of St Paul, as the sympathetic eye of Luther has recognised, is the essential nature of Christianity so clearly and distinctly expressed as in this his testament to the Christendom of the future, although,

because of the comparison with the Jewish religion, this expression is more in terms of ideas and standards of Jewish origin than is usual in his other writings.

### 5. A Supposed Epistle to Ephesus.

In our Epistle to the Romans we find a section (xvi. 1–20) which forms in itself a complete whole, and consists principally of a list of greetings to various persons mentioned by name. This passage probably occupied its present position in the first collection of Pauline epistles seeing that it is wanting in none of the manuscripts that have come down to us. We cannot imagine that St Paul, who had, as the rest of the epistle shows us, absolutely no personal knowledge of the Church of Rome, could have had so many personal acquaintances in that community. The list of greetings at least can scarcely belong to the letter to the Romans. This list is, however, directly preceded by the warm

commendation of a Christian woman, Phœbe by name, to the readers to whose abode it is evident that she is about to journey. In words of praise it is said of her that she had served the Church in Cenchrea, the port of Corinth. St Paul very earnestly begs that she may be received with hospitality and may be helped in the carrying out of business she had in hand. The Apostle emphasises his petition by informing his readers that she had already been of service also to himself. This trait is quite out of harmony with the tone of the rest of the Epistle to the Romans, which is sharply distinguished from the other epistles of St Paul by its suppression of all purely personal interests and of every pretension to a claim upon the Roman Church seeing that it was both unknown and in no sense indebted to him. Likewise the section (17–20) succeeding the list of greetings, with its sharp tone of authoritative reproach, with its impartial exposure of the faults of the readers—more particularly of the divisions that existed among

them—cannot possibly have been directed to a community of which St Paul had scarcely any detailed knowledge and which he approaches with the greatest self-suppression. Again, the greeting (20) with which St Paul elsewhere concludes his epistles stands here in the wrong position. And while at the end of the list of St Paul's greetings to various persons the usual greetings from persons in the writer's company seem to be summed up in the sentence "All the Churches of Christ salute you," there still follows, after the usual concluding benediction, another succession of greetings (21–23), which would be in better context directly after verse 16 if the two passages belonged to the same original document.

If, however, we remove xvi. 1–20, the greetings of xvi. 21–23 connect quite naturally with xv. 33; on the other hand, the separated passage wants nothing but an address to make it a complete epistle. It would then be for us a very interesting example of those letters of

commendation referred to in 2 Cor. iii. 11. It would be a letter of purely personal character. The long list of greetings interwoven with emphatic statements of personal relationship between the writer and his readers, and with reminiscences of experiences they had shared together, gives the impression that the letter was written to restore relations that had become strained or broken. The sending of a greeting from all the Churches of Christ is a peculiar trait which suggests that the letter was written during a journey of the Apostle among his convert Churches. If it be asked whither the letter may be supposed to have been addressed, the first place that occurs to us is Ephesus, though no certain proof can be given that this was so. St Paul—according to Acts xix. 8–10, 22—had dwelt in this city considerably more than two years, and therefore had certainly founded communities in other cities of the province of Asia or had at least come into personal communication with them from Ephesus as a centre, just as he had done in

Macedonia and Achaia (*cf.* 2 Cor. i. 1). According to the tradition followed in Acts xx. 16 *f.*, St Paul had reason not to visit Ephesus on his journey to Jerusalem. We remember that, in accordance with principles often expressed in the epistles to the Corinthians, he avoided visits to communities with which he was in strained relations. The earnest, brief reprimands of xvi. 17–20 suggest that this was the case with the community to which our letter was addressed. If the persons greeted were scattered throughout different cities of the province of Asia, and if Phœbe's business led her not only to Ephesus but, as may be conjectured, also to other cities, then we more easily understand why the epistle wants a definite address. The letter would not have been addressed to a particular community, but would have been given to Phœbe to present at any stage of her travels in the province of Asia.

Its connection with the Epistle to the Romans in the collection of Pauline epistles is most clearly explained if, as we have con-

jectured, the Epistle to the Romans was also written in Corinth during that last missionary journey sketched in Acts xx. 1–3. It is possible that both letters stood together in St Paul's own collection of his epistles—seeing that they were composed at the same time—and that they have therefore grown into one in the course of tradition.

### 6. The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon.

These two much shorter writings conduct us from the grand ideas which rule in the Epistle to the Romans back again to concrete questions of detail such as must crop up from time to time in the daily life of a Christian community. The Apostle speaks of himself as a prisoner. These letters are no longer written in the midst of the stress of missionary labour. The restless traveller and worker is condemned to inactivity. We are anxious to find out whether we can trace in the epistle

any influence of this enforced idleness upon the character of the Apostle. He says nothing of the place of his imprisonment—of course his readers knew this. The only places in question can be Cæsarea in Palestine and Rome (Acts xxii.–xxviii.). The determination of the question is not of importance; yet the personal notes in the epistle, more especially the fact that a slave who had deserted his master in Colossæ had met with St Paul, are much more easily explained if the Apostle was dwelling not in a remote provincial city but in Rome, the capital of the world.

In one point, however, this epistle to the Colossians coincides with the Epistle to the Romans. The Church in Colossæ, one of the chief cities of the province of Asia, to which the epistle is addressed, like the Church in Rome, was not founded by St Paul. With this city he had also, as we learn from his letter, no personal relations of any kind. We do not learn whether the case was otherwise with Laodicea and Hierapolis, whither he

sends greetings (iv. 13 *ff.*). The epistle shows us how, in spite of the Apostle's withdrawal from his missionary work, the horizon of the Christian movement still grows wider and wider; but also how that movement still bears a thoroughly Pauline character, at least in the province of Asia. The Apostle is plainly the final authority even for those Christians who have never seen him. He declares himself very satisfied with the religious condition and development of the Christians of Colossæ (i. 3 *f.*, ii. 5). He has also had reason to write a letter to Laodicea, and he wishes both Churches to exchange and read the letters addressed to each. The occasion of the letter likewise shows the authority of the great missionary. The Colossians are troubled by problems of the Christian life which they themselves cannot solve. One of them, Epaphras by name, whom St Paul calls a faithful servant of Christ, and his own fellow-servant, has visited him in Rome (i. 7 *f.*, iv. 12) and has laid these difficulties

before him. Whether his journey was undertaken for this purpose, or whether it only gave him a welcome opportunity for consulting the Apostle, we have no means of knowing. As Epaphras is still detained in Rome, St Paul sends to Colossæ a certain Tychicus, one of his own company, who, according to Acts xx. 4, is at home in the province of Asia. He is appointed to be the bearer of the letter, which he is to supplement *vivâ voce* by all kinds of news of a personal character (iv. 7*f.*).

In his letter St Paul tactfully brings himself into accord with this strange Church by expressing himself in great detail both concerning themselves and their religious condition (i. 3–23), and concerning himself and his calling (i. 24–ii. 3). Here we are struck by the strangeness of the section (i. 14–20) which illustrates the work of redemption perfected in Christ from so many points of view, and with such wealth of detail as to be quite surprising in this place. Also, in i. 27, Christ is placed

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in the foreground with special emphasis. With this preface there now follows the wished-for reply to the questions submitted to him (ii. 4–iii. 4). These are concerned with ideas introduced from without into the community, which have indeed up to the present been rejected by the Colossian Christians, though they do not feel themselves capable of refuting them. Indeed the Colossian Christians show themselves wanting in an intimate comprehension of the Gospel with all its consequences, hence in the first part of the epistle (i. 9, 28; ii. 2*f.*), and again in the last part (iii. 16), the Apostle desires for them increase in such knowledge. The ideas that have been mentioned clearly spring from doubt in the certainty of Salvation; hence the continual fresh assertion of its present possession (i. 5, 13, 23, 27). The ultimate cause of this weakness of faith is the doubt whether the work of Christ is fully sufficient for Salvation; hence the detailed proof that all has been accomplished (i. 22, ii. 10–15). And now

people have appeared in the community who declare that for a man to be saved there is still need of personal works of all kinds. They give theological reasons for their doctrine, and claim to possess a higher wisdom (ii. 8, 23). The opinions they advance do not affect the conception of the person of Christ, as many have imagined, but deal with the conduct of a true Christian (ii. 20, 22). They must observe feast-days and keep ordinances regulating food (ii. 16–23). In this way they must serve the angelic powers which bear sway in this world. Without doubt these ideas originated in Jewish soil; yet they betray traces not of the Judaism of Palestine but of a Judaism essentially freer, laying more stress upon asceticism, and revelling in speculation like that which, as we know, prevailed in Alexandria. In the main these ideas involve the usual demands made of Gentiles who wished to have some share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of Israel—those Gentiles

"that feared God" mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.

In order to refute these claims, St Paul establishes the unique significance of the Person of Christ far transcending all angelic powers; he emphasises more especially Christ's position as Head of the whole Creation, in consequence of which His work of reconciliation extends to and includes the whole universe and the angels who support and direct it. St Paul's arguments here are similar to those of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in its first two chapters.

Then in opposition to the super-spiritual doctrine of these false teachers St Paul expounds the simple ethical demands of the Christian Faith (iii. 4–iv. 6). We have in this passage a most valuable proof of the healthy soundness of his conceptions. It takes the form of a table of duties in which are established the fundamental principles (1) of the individual life (iii. 5–17); (2) of life in society, including marriage and the mutual

relations of children and parents, of master and slave (iii. 18–iv. 1); (3) of conduct towards those that are without (iv. 2–6)—a section which, in its fundamental thoughts and its general scheme, vividly reminds us of Romans xii.–xiii. A succession of personal notes gives us fairly intimate glimpses into the circumstances of St Paul's life at this time (iv. 7–17); and the letter is brought to a conclusion by a greeting from the Apostle's own hand, and a petition, disclosing to us the spirit of the fettered eagle—"Remember my bonds!" (iv. 18).

This epistle is an example showing us how St Paul, under the pressure of questions concerning the practical religious life, was led to formulate doctrinal theories. This theoretical tendency was, of course, heightened by the influence of enforced leisure upon his active, restless spirit. And besides, upon this occasion the champions of the doctrines which he refutes founded them upon philosophy (ii. 8). He must therefore follow them into their own

camp. The speculations here advanced by St Paul show still more clearly than Gal. iii.–iv. the dependence of his thought upon the Jewish Messianic conceptions which he had once learned at the feet of the Rabbis. It is interesting to note that his ideas about hold the mean between those which were developed in the Palestinian and in the Alexandrian schools of Jewish theology. Hence there is no ground for doubting the Pauline authorship of this epistle because of its peculiar and characteristic doctrines, seeing also that they may be at least traced here and there in earlier writings of St Paul. Only in the section, i. 15–20, we seem to detect a later expansion of the statement of the context concerning the significance of the personality of Christ. This section, however, must have found a place in the epistle at a very early date. Its faulty composition, and the want of clearness shown in the development of the thought of this passage, cannot be ascribed to St Paul himself.

*The accompanying Epistle to Philemon.*

Together with the former epistle a letter of purely personal character was sent to a notable member of the Colossian Church. It is the only example of a Pauline epistle of this kind that has been preserved in its original form. It is addressed to a certain Philemon whom St Paul calls his friend and fellow-worker, and also to one Apphia, and one Archippus whom he describes as a fellow-soldier, and to the Church of the household of Philemon. The letter is occasioned by a runaway slave of Philemon, Onesimus by name, who had somehow met with St Paul. Whether he was already a Christian or was converted by St Paul is, unfortunately, not clearly stated. St Paul had convinced Onesimus that it was his duty to return to his master. Tychicus was charged to conduct him to Colossæ. St Paul himself gives Onesimus a charming letter in which he pleads for the runaway with a delicate, tactful, half-playful wit which

vividly reminds us of the letters of Luther. Especially delightful is the way in which, at the beginning of the letter (4–7), he gains touch with the slave's master, Philemon, who was evidently personally unknown to him. The whole epistle is a perfect jewel of the intimate epistolary style of a hero whom we otherwise meet with only on the heights of grand world-moving action. In its own peculiar way it convinces us of his surpassing greatness alike in mind and heart.

### 7. The Epistle to the Philippians.

We are treading upon very sacred ground as we read this epistle. It is without doubt the last from St Paul's hand. The thought of departure, of death, broods over the letter. No formal doctrinal statements, no long chains of reasoning are here addressed to the readers; there is no trace of polemical controversy with them. All is the expression of personal belief and feeling, the out-breathing

of the very soul of the writer. The Church to which the letter is written evidently stood closer than all others to the heart of the Apostle. His friendly relations with it had never been disturbed, its past history recalls no bitter memories. He had granted it many privileges which show his absolute trust; hence the letter bears a peculiarly intimate character. Even its occasion is characteristic. The Christians of Philippi had made a collection among themselves for the support of the imprisoned Apostle, as St Paul had already permitted them to do in former days—them alone of all his convert Churches. One of their number, Epaphroditus, has conveyed their alms to Rome. The passage in which St Paul returns thanks for this gift (iv. 10–20) presents as tactful a treatment of a delicate matter as can well be found in the whole range of higher literature. The Philippian messenger had been stricken with sickness near unto death, therefore his return was delayed (ii. 25–30). Now, however, he is so far restored to health

that he can think of his journey homewards (ii. 25–28 *f.*). St Paul sends this letter with him, together with the promise that Timothy, one of his most faithful followers, should very shortly pay a return visit to Philippi in the name of the Apostle (ii. 19–22). But St Paul does not wait until Timothy can tell them news of him; and accordingly after thanksgiving to God (with which he always began his epistles) for the excellent condition of the community, and after expressing his yearning for them (i. 3–11), he proceeds to inform them of his affairs. First we learn the fact that in the course of his trial St Paul had been acquitted of any suspicion of ordinary crime, and that at the time of writing the only question under investigation was whether his missionary activity for the promotion of Christianity was a penal offence. He is full of joy because thus Christ is every way proclaimed—he cares not from whatever motives—so that now even his trial forwards the work of the mission (i. 12–18). And then he pours forth

his whole soul before his faithful Philippians. The tide of feeling ebbs and flows between yearning for death and hope that he may be spared to carry on his work. But all is elevated above the sphere of self. We trace in these words that, as he himself says, "for him to live is Christ." The glory and peace of eternity broods over his whole personality.

In a fresh section (i. 27–ii. 18) St Paul comes to the circumstances of the Philippian Church, in which there is a want of real unity of spirit (i. 27–ii. 2 *f.*). There is of course no open schism, no Judaistic propaganda perplexes the conscience, but persecutions from without and spiritual pride within disturb the harmony and peace of the community. Even personal quarrels contribute to this evil (iv. 2 *f.*). It is not clear who are the adversaries of i. 28—they may with equal probability be Jews or heathen. The exhortation to unity culminates in an exhortation to humility (ii. 4). The humility of Christ, who though He was in the form of God yet humbled Himself, is held up

as an example. Here again a purely practical motive has led the Apostle to hand down to us one of the loftiest expressions of his faith in Christ (ii. 5–11). Then the writer seems to hasten towards the end of his letter in the section ii. 19–30. This section is filled with the personal matters mentioned at the beginning of the epistle. But it seems, indeed, as if St Paul could not bring this intimate talk to a conclusion. Yet again, evidently with the thought of finishing, he repeats the words of ii. 18: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe" (iii. 1). But then he suddenly bursts forth with an invective against the Jews in such sharp and bitter terms as we scarcely find elsewhere in his epistles (iii. 2 *f.*). He evidently strives to express himself as strongly as possible, and we may therefore conclude that those who were embarrassing by their intrigues the course of his trial at Rome (i. 17), as well as the adversaries who were persecuting

the Philippians (i. 28), were most probably the Jews, his sworn foes. At this moment he is most deeply moved by their personal malice against himself. They must have made the grossest attacks upon his honour and his past history as a Jew. Thanks to them, we now learn something concerning St Paul's life before his conversion, concerning times which lie for him in the distant past (iii. 4–6). The reaction from these memories moves him to a most heartfelt, most humble, and yet most noble profession of his fellowship with Christ (7–11), followed by a sorrowful admission that he is still far from having attained to the goal of perfection set before him (12–14), and concluding with the consoling thought that in Christianity perfection consists in untiring effort together with the humble consciousness of insufficiency (15). As a contrast he now turns his gaze upon Christians who, it seems from i. 3–11, cannot belong to the Philippian community, and yet are in such close contact with it or with him that he even weeps over

them. He calls them "enemies of the Cross of Christ whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (iii. 18 *f.*). We learn nothing more of these people, but the offences referred to can only have been such gross moral scandals as, according to the testimony of St Paul's epistles, troubled almost every Church. Now, once again, the conclusion seems to draw near as we hear the words repeated: "Rejoice in the Lord alway" (iv. 4). But the Apostle adds some short words of blessing and admonition which are to be counted among the noblest of St Paul's gifts to posterity. Nowhere has the born Jew, the rabbi, approached so closely to the moral ideal of the Greek philosophers as in the conceptions of honour and worth which he here strings together (8). It is, indeed, the only time that the Greek idea of virtue appears in the New Testament, for in "whatsoever is lovely, whatsoever is of good report" the beautiful stands side by side with the

good in close fellowship. It is as if one heard the ripple of the waves at the meeting of the two streams which have their source in Zion and the Parthenon. Paul in Athens, and at the same time Paul raised high above all the glories and the afflictions of earth—this, figuratively speaking, is the twofold memorial that the Apostle has left of himself in his last epistle, which may in truth be called his swan-song.

* * * * *

Again and again men have imagined that they have discovered reasons for doubting the genuineness of one or other of these letters which we have just discussed. Such suspicions have been most often urged against the Epistle to the Colossians, less frequently against the Epistle to the Thessalonians, and still less frequently against that to the Philippians. These doubts have had their origin in the supposition of scholars that the great epistles to Corinth, Galatia, and Rome

presented St Paul's mind in its completeness, so that he must always have expressed himself as he does in these epistles and could never have given utterance to other thoughts or be moved by other feelings than those he champions and cherishes therein. But even in these very epistles St Paul displays such a facility in change of expression, such an unexhaustible power of considering a matter from many points of view, and such ease in adapting himself to the standpoint of those he wishes to convince, that the standard proposed is much too inadequate. Before all things these letters clearly show that he had fashioned for himself no final theological system, that he was not over-anxious not to contradict himself now and again (as pedants might judge contradiction), and that he was always capable of starting upon new lines of thought to meet new problems. In the case at least of the Epistles to the Thessalonians and Philippians it is difficult to discover any reason for a supposed forgery seeing that both letters

are artless expressions of feeling. But even the Epistle to the Colossians fits so well into the general scheme of St Paul's thought, speaks so much in his language, and offers such an abundance of incident that is quite out of touch with the interests of later times, that in spite of many a peculiarity this letter still seems to be most easily understood on the supposition that it proceeded from the hand of St Paul himself.

Many scholars, however, of recent years have advanced far beyond the point of questioning the genuineness of single epistles. They assert that the whole body of Pauline literature had its origin in the second century, and was composed with the view of settling questions, which could only have occupied the minds of men at the beginning of the second century, by means of the authority of a famous missionary of the first generation. This supposition makes shipwreck upon the hard fact that the whole documentary evidence of the second century presents not a shadow of

a proof that the question which above all others is dealt with in the epistles—Whether the Jewish Law is still binding upon Christians? —occupied the minds of the men of that period. But still stronger refutation is afforded in the impossibility that the mighty creative personality revealed in these epistles, a personality which soars far above all products of the second century, could ever be the fabrication of a forger. We can indeed only understand this personality by assuming its actual development starting from a position of strict Judaism, and then by a sudden and violent breach with former associations giving in its allegiance to the glorified Christ who was for a short time revealed upon earth—in Jesus—in order to inaugurate the work which His apostle now carries forward with ceaseless energy. Again, this strange hypothesis is disproved by a multitude of details, quite unconnected with the supposed aim of the epistles, and yet so carefully and fully treated therein as to compel us to assume in the

author a talent for romance which is by no means congenial to the soil of the second Christian century. And finally, there would still remain to be solved this primary literary mystery—How it happened that these letters could establish themselves so quickly in Christendom and could so absolutely transform the whole tradition concerning the first generation of Christians?

No indeed! in these letters we possess an imperishable memorial of one of the grandest spirits of humanity, of one who fulfilled in many respects the ideal of a noble Christian character—a monument set up at one of the most critical turning points of human history. These letters enshrine for us a religious soul, original and creative, in spite of all its dependence upon the contemporary conceptions—a spirit of wondrous depth that expresses itself in terms of marvellously universal application in spite of their strongly-marked individual character. Of course this can only be realised when one regards these letters not as quarries

whence one may hew four-square dogmas, but as a temple wherein pillars and carvings that once adorned some old synagogue cannot disturb the overpowering impression of grandeur and harmony made upon us as we view it. But no! this simile will not suffice! There is nothing of the nature of stone in these epistles: all is living personality, mobile, manifold, and various, the true offspring of its times and bearing the stamp of its environment, and yet bringing to expression that inmost nature of man which ever remains the same. As we gaze upon the great literary memorials of the Greeks we may well question whether these Pauline letters are not equal to them—indeed, do not surpass them—in spiritual significance, in psychological depth and loftiness of ideal, above all in the art of complete and forcible expression. It is beyond controversy that no Greek classic has exercised such influence upon the general trend of human thought and endeavour, or like these letters has

been able to preserve such a never-ageing power of impressing each new generation; certainly none has been able to keep alive for all time the personality of its author with such intimate and compelling force of appeal.

## II

## THE GOSPELS

THE writings which were at a later time called gospels were in the first place composed not for a particular circle of Christians and to supply its temporary needs, as were the Pauline epistles, but for all Christians; indeed, for all who took interest in Christianity, even though the authors may have had their own particular communities in mind when writing. Their purpose is not to offer something of their own, but to hold fast that which had been delivered to them—the words of Jesus and the events of His life. These books are not declarations of faith, but records; the eye of the author is fixed not so much upon the present and the future as upon the past.

Herewith a new and characteristic phenome-

non makes its appearance. Letters are written, as a matter of course, everywhere where men who wish to communicate with one another are separated from one another by space. It is only natural that there arose also among the Christians epistles—creations of the moment serving the immediate need of the present. The composition of a book is quite a different thing, and the gospels are books. There is need here of a wider outlook. The author of a book purposes to offer something to a wider, more or less unlimited, circle, something of essential and lasting significance; his undertaking demands much preparatory labour—he must collect, he must chose and arrange his material. It is, in fact, a question of a work, as we say, not of a letter.

But the production of gospels in primitive Christendom is, besides, noteworthy from two other points of view which are closely connected with one another. The first generation held its gaze fixed upon the future; it looked for the coming of the Messiah to bring all

things to perfection. The earthly activity of Jesus was for them only a preliminary condition of this future coming, and its chief significance lay in His death. The origin of a gospel literature is a sign of a change of outlook. The future loses its fascination, its light begins to grow dim.

Herewith the past begins again to show itself. It must lend its aid to faith in the future, it must teach men how to prepare for this future. The reflected glory of the future was already sought in the past. The human form of Jesus, after the death which had thrown it into shadow, had given place to that of the Christ in heavenly glory. Now Jesus is again seen. With the creation of the gospels Christendom begins quite unconsciously to turn from the future to the past—a new attitude of mind, in direct opposition to the early beginnings of Christianity yet characteristic of the new religion in its later stage. That it was a question here of a real change of attitude is plain from St Paul's epistles.

They show no living interest in the material which was worked up in the gospels. The object of St Paul's devotion is not the earthly form of Jesus but the eternal Christ, who only for a short moment appeared in Jesus, in the flesh and divested of His Godhead, that He might take away the curse of sin. St Paul experiences this Christ more intimately as ever-present spirit than in the historical Jesus, His past form of manifestation. Even when he occasionally quotes the words of Jesus, it is never in connection with matters of faith which he regarded as most precious and essential, but only as an authority for particular rules of conduct (1 Cor. vii. 10, ix. 14, xi. 23 *f.*) or for particular traits in his grand picture of the future (1 Thess. iv. 15). Such an one had no need of a gospel.

And yet we should certainly err did we regard St Paul as typical in this respect of all Christians, even those only of the first generation. Not every one, indeed scarcely any one among the Gentile Christians, had in former

days lived in such an atmosphere of Messianic hopes, was so capable of dependence upon that which was purely spiritual, and had experienced a conversion so completely in a line with his peculiar temperament and history. Other souls, with a more urgent need for some object to see and to depend upon, sought after the image of Jesus as the background for their conception of the Christ and wished to hear His words. His life must show them why He is the Messiah. They would see and hear by His example how they must live; His words must form a guarantee for their hopes for the future. And above all, they wished for a solution of the mystery that this Messiah must die upon the cross, not in terms of theological conceptions of the Divine Counsel, but in simple words of human history which would make them realise how so strange an event could ever have come to pass.

Hence it was that the literature of the gospels arose in its characteristic form. This is the reason why these gospels are books of

history and yet not books of history; why in them history is indeed narrated, but not for its own sake, only as a means to an end which lay in the present and in the future.

Even if we had not the testimony of St Luke (i. 1) that many attempts had been made to write gospels, those writings of this kind which have come down to us are themselves a proof of industrious activity in this sphere of literature. Without regard to the fact that we still possess testimony to the existence of other similar writings—of which unfortunately only a few fragments were preserved after that those received into the New Testament had become canonised—our first three gospels point back to literary sources worked up in them. We omit the Gospel of St John because it does not belong to the same class as the first three. Careful investigation of these three gospels has made it clear:—(1) that they could not have been written independently of one another; (2) that none of them is the work of a first hand; (3) that St Matthew and St Luke

at least cannot stand in a direct relationship of dependence upon one another. These facts, to which our gospels lend testimony which is absolutely beyond controversy, have pointed out to Science the path of further enquiry. Now that the great majority of scholars are agreed as to the main points in the explanation of the relationship of our three gospels one to another, it may be allowed that we at once attempt to describe the development of gospel literature from its first beginnings, instead of starting from our gospels and investigating their mutual relations and then working backwards to the earlier stages of this literature.

### 1. St Matthew's Collection of Sayings.

The sole authority to which Christians of the second century constantly appealed—beside the Law and the Prophets—was "the Lord" as they say, or more precisely what the Lord had "proclaimed," had "said," had "commanded"—in short, the Sayings of Jesus. It

is only natural that the first literary effort connected with the tradition of the life of Jesus should be devoted to the compilation of these sayings. The literature of civilised peoples, and more particularly of the Jewish people, affords analogies to this description of literary activity. We still possess compilations of the sayings of great rabbis of that period, which were in similar fashion gradually collected and given a fixed shape in writing. Nor did this work demand any special literary talent. The value of the result depended only upon the trustworthy character of the compiler in the reception and delivery of the sayings. His literary activity comes into play only in choice and arrangement of material, and in the short historical introductions which give the occasion of a particular saying.

A compilation of this kind forms the chief source of the material which is common to the Gospels of St Luke and St Matthew alone among the three. We can here only state,

not prove in detail, what is presupposed in the following description—namely, that this compilation is preserved in its original order in St Luke, not in St Matthew. But perhaps the most conclusive proof of the correctness of this statement is afforded by the fact that if we simply place together those passages of St Luke that have close parallels in St Matthew but are foreign to St Mark, we find that we have in our hands a collection of sayings of Jesus systematically arranged according to distinct leading ideas. I here give only the headings which bring these leading ideas to expression, with the result that we arrive at the following list:—

The appearance and reception of Jesus:—

(1) Discourse to the people concerning the right conduct of men one to another. (vi. 20–vii. 1. *Cf.* St Matt. v.–vii.)

(2) The Gentile Centurion. (vii. 2–10. *Cf.* St Matt. viii. 5–13.)

(3) The Jewish Baptist. (vii. 18–35. *Cf.* St Matt. xi. 2–19.)

The disciples :—

(1) Offers of discipleship. (ix. 57–62. *Cf.* St Matt. viii. 19–22.)

(2) Vocation of discipleship. (x. 1–24. *Cf.* St Matt. x. 1–15, xi. 20–27.)

(3) The disciples' prayer. (xi. 1–13. *Cf.* St Matt. vi. 9–13, vii. 7–11.)

The adversaries :—

(1) The calumnious charges of the Pharisees. (xi. 14–36. *Cf.* St Matt. xii. 22–30, 43–45, 38–42 ; vi. 22 *f.*)

(2) The condemnation of the Pharisees. (xi. 37–54. *Cf.* St Matt. xxiii.)

(3) Rules of conduct in relation to such foes. (xii. 1–12. *Cf.* St Matt. x. 26–33, xii. 32, x. 19 *f.*)

The world :—

(1) The right attitude of disciples towards worldly goods. (xii. 22–34, to which xii. 13–21 perhaps formed an introduction. *Cf.* St Matt. vi. 20–33.)

(2) What disciples have to expect from the world. (xii. 35–59. *Cf.* St

Matt. xxiv. 42–51, xxv. 1–13, x. 34–36, xvi. 2 *f.*, v. 25 *f.*)

(3) Signs of the coming storm, xiii. 1–5; Judgment, 6–9; and final perfection, 18–21. (*Cf.* St Matt. xxi. 19, xiii. 31–33.)

Forebodings of the End:—

(1) Sentence delivered against the people, the prince, the city. (xiii. 22–35. *Cf.* St Matt. vii. 13 *f.*, xxv. 11 *f.*, vii. 22 *f.*, viii. 11 *f.*, xix. 30, xxiii. 37–39.)

(2) Warnings addressed to His followers. (xiv. 15–27 or –33 or –35, xv. 4–7, xvii. 1–4. *Cf.* St Matt. xxii. 2–10; x. 37 *f.*; xviii. 12–14, 6 *f.*, 21 *f.*)

(3) The end of the world. (xvii. 20–37. *Cf.* St Matt. xxiv.)

As we survey this material, its choice and arrangement, we soon perceive the literary character of the compiler. Above all, we are struck by his complete self-effacement. His introductions are of the most meagre descrip-

tion, generally quite colourless and formal—*e.g.* vi. 20, 39; xi. 29; xii. 1, 54; xiii. 6; xiv. 25. Sometimes he enlivens the succession of sayings with connective remarks—*e.g.* xi. 45, xii. 4. Only as an exception do we find a short narrative inserted in order to give the right setting to some saying—*e.g.* vii. 18–20; xi. 1, 14–16; xiii. 31. These, though most simple in style, are apt and to the point. Only once does a saying of the Lord require for its comprehension a more developed story (vii. 2–10), and this is very well told in a style both pleasing and vivid.

A second impression we receive is that the compiler was most conscientious and careful in his acceptation of sayings of the Lord. Scarcely a word of his compilation gives cause for doubt. All is original; nothing is borrowed from the Old Testament or from the sayings of the Rabbis; nor do we discover any trace of the developed religious phraseology of the epistles of the New Testament. In style and character these sayings answer closely to the

words of Jesus in St Mark, to which they are sometimes only doublets. Thus we may compare the continuous passages—St Luke x. 4–11 with St Mark vi. 8–11; St Luke xvii. 22–37 with St Mark xiii. 4–6, 28–37; St Luke xi. 37–54 with St Mark xii. 38–40; while in the case of shorter sayings St Luke xi. 16 is parallel to St Mark viii. 11, St Luke xii. 1 to St Mark viii. 15, St Luke xiii. 18–21 to St Mark iv. 30–32, St Luke xiv. 34 *f.* to St Mark ix. 50.

As far as the choice of material is concerned, it is clear that little interest is taken in the miraculous and in dogma. That Jesus worked miracles is mentioned only in x. 13; the same is said of the disciples in x. 19. The only detailed example of a miracle is given in the account of the healing of the centurion's servant (vii. 2–10). Except in x. 22, we never meet with statements concerning the person of Jesus or His work of redemption, such as those so often put forward by St Paul. Nor has the compiler any interest in chronology: once only,

in xiii. 22, does he note the critical turning point in the public ministry of our Lord. The only facts of history brought before us are these—the imprisonment of the Baptist and his message to Jesus (vii. 18 *ff.*); the sending forth of the disciples (x. 1 *ff.*); the petition of the centurion (vii. 2 *ff.*); the feast at the house of a Pharisee (xi. 37 *ff.*); the machinations of Herod (xiii. 31 *ff.*); and finally, two contemporary events in Jerusalem (xiii. 1 *ff.*). Otherwise we learn nothing of the course of the external history of our Lord's life.

On the other hand, it is equally obvious wherein lay the special interest of the compiler. In the first place he is interested in the ethical requirements of our Lord's teaching, as, for instance, in His directions prescribing man's conduct to his neighbour or in regard to worldly goods (vi. 20–49; xii. 13–31, 33 *f.*); more especially in what our Lord demanded of His fellow-workers and followers (x. 1 *ff.*; xii. 2–12, 35–48; xiv. 26–35) illustrated by the conversations in ix. 57–62. Further points of

importance to the compiler are our Lord's thoughts concerning prayer, its substance and its efficacy (xi. 1–13); also His decision concerning Gentiles (vii. 2–10), His criticism of the Baptist (vii. 18–35) and of His opponents (xi. 37–54); again, His defence against calumnious misrepresentations (xi. 14–36); finally, His references to His death (xii. 49 *f.*, xiii. 32 *f.*). The greatest space is, however, occupied by sayings which emphasise the serious import of the present, or describe the future, its terrors and the impending judgment (vi. 20–23; xii. 11 *f.*, 49–53, 54–56, 57–59; xiv. 15–34; and again xii. 8 *f.*, 10, 32, 35–37, 38 *f.*, 40–48; xiii. 1–9, 22–30; xvii. 20–37). In these passages we constantly meet with the phrase "Son of Man" (vi. 22; vii. 34; ix. 58; xi. 30; xii. 8, 10, 40; xvii. 22–24), while in the rest of St Luke, omitting the sections parallel to St Mark, the term is employed only in xviii. 8, xix. 10. "The kingdom of God" is also a favourite subject of discourse (vi. 20; vii. 28; ix. 60, 62; x. 9, 11; xi. 2, 20; xii. 31, 32; xiii.

18, 20, 28 *f.*; xiv. 15; xvii. 20 *f.*). This expression is found in the rest of St Luke, again omitting Markan parallels, only in the phrase "to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God" (iv. 43, viii. 1, xvi. 16); in passages dealing with the time of its coming (xix. 11, xxi. 31) —a question which, as we learn from Acts i. 9, much occupied the mind of the author and his contemporaries (these verses are besides dependent on xvii. 20 *f.*); in the verses ix. 2, 11, which are taken from x. 9, 11, and have been inserted in Markan parallels; finally, in the paraphrase "My kingdom" (xxii. 29, 30, 42). Of comparatively rare occurrence are expressions, which we constantly meet with elsewhere in the gospel, wherein our Lord uses with strong emphasis the pronoun of the first person (vi. 46; vii. 23; xi. 23; x. 16, 24; xiv. 26 *ff.*). In these passages a claim is advanced which is scarcely more than any master might make of his disciples, although a higher self-consciousness may be clearly traced in the background. The word "Christ," which occurs

twelve times elsewhere in St Luke, together with the expression "Son of God," which elsewhere occurs nine times, does not appear in our compilation of sayings. Messianic tone and colouring, however, declare themselves in the sayings (xvii. 23 *f.*, 26; x. 22) and in the parable (xii. 35 *ff.*), and besides in the expression "Son of Man."

As far as concerns arrangement, longer passages, which have clear logical connection throughout, are of quite rare occurrence. Such are the discourses concerning the love of enemies (vi. 27–36), against anxiety (xii. 22–31), the narrative concerning the centurion (vii. 2–10), the Beelzebub controversy (xi. 14–23), the word concerning Herod (xiii. 32–35), the exhortation to perseverance in discipleship (xiv. 25–35), the prophecies of the future (xiii. 23–30, xvii. 20–37), and the parables of the Rich Fool (xii. 15–21) and of the Great Supper (xiv. 15–24)—if the latter, indeed, belongs to the original compilation.

Elsewhere the compiler is satisfied with

placing together short sayings of allied meaning, and the joints in his composition are still everywhere discernible. Thus the great discourse to the people (vi. 20 *ff.*), with the exception of the section (27–36) just mentioned, is simply made up of separate sayings—vi. 20–23 stands by itself, so also the sayings vi. 39, 40, 41 *f.*, 43–45, 46, 47–49. Likewise the seemingly continuous discourses (xi. 1–13, xii. 1–12), when closely examined, are only mosaics of independent sayings. This is no less the case with the passages xii. 32, 33 *f.*, 35–38, 39 *f.*, 49–52, 54–56, 57–59, and again xiii. 1–5, 6–9. Often these sayings are held together, as it were, by a catchword—as, for instance, in xi. 34–36 by the word "light," in xii. 35–48 by the word "slave."

It is evident that it is only similarity of content that has brought together the three dialogues concerning discipleship in ix. 57–62. The sayings relating to the Baptist, collected together in vii. 18 *ff.*, were evidently spoken at different times. Thus verses 31–35 certainly

belong to a much later period than the rest; also verses 24–28 may well have stood originally by themselves. Again, in the discourse to the disciples (x. 1 *ff.*), the woes against the cities (13–15) plainly break into the context. The utterances of x. 21 *f.* and 23 *f.* likewise suggest a different occasion than that which is given. Also the parable of xi. 24–26, in its present position, breaks the context, while the woes in xi. 42–44 do not at least sound probable in the mouth of one who was at the time guest at a Pharisee's table.

While on the one hand this attempt to combine the material, so as to give smoothness to the narrative, testifies to the literary taste of the compiler, so also the general principles according to which, as shown above, the material is grouped are very happily chosen by him and prove his sure mastery of the material.

It is, moreover, quite evident that in the arrangement of these groups the compiler stood in close touch with the points of view and the interests which directed our Lord

Himself, and that he had intimate knowledge of the forces which influenced His career. And since all the sayings in their grammatical form have a strong Semitic tinge, it may be conjectured that they were written down by the compiler in the Aramaic tongue, which our Lord Himself spoke. Moreover the verbal differences found in the respective reproductions of the sayings in St Luke and St Matthew suggest the further inference that the two evangelists had used different Greek translations of this compilation. Now Papias, who flourished about the middle of the second century, reports as an established tradition of his times that one of the Twelve Apostles, Matthew the tax collector—no doubt the one of their number who was most ready with his pen—had collected together the sayings of the Lord in the Aramaic tongue, and that in later days each had translated them as best he could. This tradition does not of course tally with our Gospel of St Matthew, although it is to this writing that Papias mistakenly

refers; we may therefore be sure that it is no mere legend composed to explain the origin of our first gospel. But this notice of Papias admirably suits that compilation of sayings of our Lord which criticism of the gospels demands—a coincidence which forms a strong witness for the accuracy of the tradition. If we are justified in referring Papias' notice to this collection of sayings, then it was one that had himself heard the preaching of our Lord who was the first to undertake to collect and write down the utterances of his Master—evidently the most precious and most important incidents of His earthly life both for the writer and his times—and thus to hand them down uncorrupted to future generations. The compilation itself gives no sure indication of the time when this may have been done. At all events there is no sign that Jerusalem had yet been destroyed. The fact that the compilation was written in Aramaic suggests an early date; hence it may very well have been written at the same time as the epistles of St Paul, thus

forming the single though indeed uniquely precious contribution of Palestine to primitive Christian literature.

If this compilation was composed in the tongue of Palestine, and if it was taken up into the great Gospels of St Luke and St Matthew, we can easily understand that it was early lost in its original form.

This compilation is generally known by the name "Logia" (*i.e.* "sayings" or "oracles"), the word which Papias uses in the passage we have referred to.

## 2. The Reminiscences of St Peter written by St Mark.

It cannot escape the notice of the careful reader of our Gospel of St Mark—a gospel which is made up of a series of separate stories concerning the public ministry of our Lord only very occasionally broken by records of discourses—that its narratives may, in regard to form and content, be divided into two

groups. The first group, which now alone concerns us, is characterised by a striking brevity in sketching the action, by the absence of notes from the hand of the narrator and of any kind of religious phraseology or oratorical ornament. The facts alone speak; they appeal directly to the reader. The colouring of Palestine stands out clearly, the characteristic, genuine, inimitable forms of the Judaism of those days pass upon the stage. Jesus Himself, deeply stirred by feeling and emotion, appears before us in simple and complete humanity. Not one of these narratives by its parallelism with an Old Testament story gives cause for suspicion; not one of them entices us to ferret out beneath what is narrated some hidden, deeper meaning. Their purpose is only to relate what happened; and in spite of the lively colours in which the characters and their environment are pictured before us, the interest of the narrator really lies only in the words spoken by our Lord upon each occasion.

Regarded from a literary standpoint, these

narratives are jewels of a simple art which has an eye only for the essential and yet presents it in living form. There is no trace of the terminology of St Paul or of the set phraseology of Christianity. No interest is shown in questions of dogma, such, for instance, as the correct doctrine concerning the Person or the mission of our Lord. Just as in the Logia of St Matthew, miracles are of quite secondary importance. We find narratives of the cure of a possessed man (i. 23 *ff.*), of St Peter's mother-in-law who was sick of a fever (i. 30 *f.*), of a paralytic (ii. 1 *ff.*), of a man with a withered hand (iii. 1 *ff.*); mention is made of cures wrought upon other afflicted people in Capernaum (i. 32–34) and some sick in Nazareth (vi. 5). But the emphasis of the narrative never rests upon these cures; they are only related because they belong to the circumstances occasioning the utterance or the characteristic behaviour of Jesus, which form the sole objects of interest. Somewhat more frequently than in the Logia of St Matthew

stress is laid upon the Messianic character of Jesus—for instance in the narrative of the Baptism (i. 10 *f.*), in the cry of the possessed (i. 24), in the simile of the bridegroom (ii. 19), in the question concerning the Davidic sonship of the Messiah (xii. 35–37), perhaps in the claim to forgive sins (ii. 10); again, on the part of the disciples, in their confession (viii. 29), and in the petition of the sons of Zebedee (x. 37); finally, on the part of our Lord, the disciples, and the people, in the story of the entry into Jerusalem (xi. 1 *ff.*). However, the expression "Son of God" never occurs, except in the voice at the Baptism (i. 11) and in the utterance of xiii. 32, though elsewhere in the gospel it forms the proper formula for profession of belief (i. 1, iii. 11, v. 7, ix. 7, xiv. 61, xv. 39); and the word "Christ" only occurs in the confession of the Twelve (viii. 29) and in the theological dispute of xii. 35, though it likewise is often employed elsewhere by the evangelist (i. 1, ix. 41, xiii. 21, xiv. 61, xv. 32). The term "Son of Man"

is found in ii. 10, 28 ; viii. 31, 38 ; x. 33, 45 ; as also in xiv. 21, 41, 62—if, indeed, these parts of the story of the Passion belong to the group of which we are speaking ; while in the sections due to the evangelist it occurs only in ix. 9, 12 and ix. 31, after the pattern of viii. 31 and x. 33. Frequent reference is made to the sure imminence of the violent death (ii. 19 ; viii. 31 ; x. 32, 34, 38, 45). But it is not quite certain that all these passages belong to the more ancient stratum of the Gospel of St Mark.

The narratives possessing the character described now stand side by side in groups which are evidently held together by certain common leading ideas. As in the Logia, so here we find that no interest is taken in the historical development of the public life of our Lord, though the varied light thrown upon the changing scenes suffers us to trace different epochs of the ministry. We only meet with narratives of fairly long context at the beginning of the gospel in the account of the first Sabbath at

Capernaum (i. 21–39), and at the close in the dramatic description of the first day in Jerusalem (xi. 1–xii. 12)—we omit the story of the Passion because it is difficult to conclude whether and how far it belongs to the set of narratives we are now discussing. Groups of narratives bound together by some leading idea are:—ii. 1–iii. 6, five narratives which explain why the Jews came into conflict with Jesus; iii. 21–35 together with vi. 1–6, narratives which show the hardness of heart of the Pharisees, of the relatives and fellow-citizens of our Lord; xii. 13–44, controversies with our Lord concerning religious and political questions in which traps were purposely laid for Him. While these groups are intended rather to answer the historical question why Jesus met with ill success, we find others side by side with them whose concern is purely religious; such are:—iv. 1–9, 21–32, parables concerning the laws of development of the kingdom of God; x. 13–45, showing the conditions of entry into the kingdom

and what is offered therein to mankind; xiii. 1–6, 28–37, a description of the near approach of the End. To these two classes of groups we may perhaps add a third, which is concerned with the development of the body of disciples—if, that is, we may be allowed to conjecture that passages, which offer many points of analogy to one another and are now used to mark sectional divisions in our St Mark, originally formed a single group of narratives; these are:—The account of the call of the first four disciples (i. 16–20), of the completion of the number of the Twelve (iii. 13–19), of the sending forth of the Twelve (vi. 7–16), of the confession of the Twelve (viii. 27–ix. 1); probably also the discourses against their ambitious claims (ix. 33–40). As all these groups only contain narratives of the kind we have above described, we may assume with certainty that the arrangement of the groups is due to the author of the narratives.

To the same Papias who, as we saw, has

preserved for us the primitive Christian tradition concerning St Matthew's compilation, we owe also another notice, upon the testimony of "the Elder"—an authority of the end of the first century. He tells us that Mark, the companion of Peter, wrote down the narratives of the words and deeds of the Lord which Peter gave in his teaching, as he remembered them and accurately but not in order. Irenæus adds that St Mark did this after St Peter's death. The application of this tradition to our St Mark, which is plainly intended by Papias and has been generally accepted in later times, is impossible. For this gospel is in "order," and indeed—if it is thought that the original Greek work of Papias should be translated "correct order"—is the most correct of all the gospels in its chronological arrangement. However, apart from this consideration, the gospel cannot be the work of a single first hand seeing that the style is so varied. Here again it happens that this ancient tradition admirably suits the passages we have just

analysed from St Mark. In them records of words and deeds are combined; the narrative is not in order; the life-like description and colouring give the impression that they proceed from an eye-witness; their extraordinary terseness of style, which permits us to compare them with cut diamonds, is most easily explained by the fact that they were constantly narrated. The abrupt appearance of St Peter in i. 16–29, iii. 16, viii. 29, x. 28, and the abrupt mention of other members of the Twelve in ix. 38; x. 35, 41, are best understood upon our hypothesis.

If our interpretation of Papias' words be correct we owe these narratives to the combined effort of St Peter, the first disciple of our Lord, and of his assistant St Mark. Even though we cannot surely distinguish the separate part to be ascribed to each, we may yet recognise the genius of St Peter in the clear eye which saw the life of Palestine in its true colouring and caught, as it were, the very change of expression in the face of his

Master. We are, moreover, justified in supposing that it was he who clothed his reminiscences in this terse, classical form of narrative. Perhaps we may estimate the compass of what seemed to him of decisive import in the Life of Jesus from his choice of reminiscences. On the other hand, it is to St Mark that we probably owe the apt grouping and, of course, the faithful reproduction of the narratives.

In fixing therefore the date of the writing of these narratives the years immediately succeeding the year 64 A.D.—the year of St Peter's death, as is fairly certain—would come under our consideration. There is no ground for supposing a later date seeing that the colouring is all so fresh and the portraits so full of life. The place of writing would no doubt be Rome, where St Peter suffered as one of the victims of the persecution of Nero, whence also St Mark (1 Pet. v. 13) greets the Christians of Asia Minor. This conclusion is supported by the numerous Latin

expressions which are found in these sections of our gospel.

* * * * *

That in these two primitive gospels, St Matthew's compilation of sayings and St Mark's group of narratives, historical material of the very first importance has been preserved, is proved by the circumstance that both of them, though there is no trace of their acquaintance with one another, most closely coincide in their outline of the character and life of our Lord, and in their representation of the leading ideas and style of discourse of Him to whom alone they would bear record with complete self-effacement. Moreover, that which is offered us in both writings is distinguished by its wonderful force and originality from the ideas, conceptions, and interests of the most varied character to which the rest of primitive Christian literature bears witness. Never has mankind listened to simpler, more direct, more living, and more convincing narratives drawn from the life of one of the great

ones of human history. Never has there been bestowed upon men a work of purer literary art—a work wherein the artist is more completely effaced by his subject—than in these two original gospels.

### 3. The Gospel according to St Mark.

Though St Mark in his record of the reminiscences of St Peter refrained from giving a continuous history of the public ministry of our Lord, still the small connected pictures he draws—such as the first Sabbath in Capernaum, the first day in Jerusalem—were such as to awaken a desire for a more continuous sketch of our Saviour's life. And as the personal witnesses of that life gradually died out, the desire naturally became more urgent. The first person, so far as we know, who sought to satisfy this pressing need was the author of our Gospel of St Mark. And his work shows that he was well equipped for such an undertaking.

The groups of St Mark afforded him a sure foundation and an admirable nucleus for further development. He only needed to combine with them other narratives current among Christians. Here also the style and grouping of St Mark formed the pattern for his own description and arrangement; nevertheless these new pictures afford unmistakable signs of the touch of another hand. This evangelist has delight in the material which he collects and in his work of narration. He loves to work up his pictures (*e.g.* v. 1–20, 21–43; vi. 14–29), and to adorn them with all kinds of touches which add but little to the main result (*e.g.* v. 37–40). His dialogue is less pointed; it approaches nearer to the style of ordinary conversation (*e.g.* v. 6–13, 30–32; vi. 35–38; viii. 2–5, 14–21; ix. 16–22). He is concerned with the deeper truth which he sees incorporated in the stories or shining through them. These must all be brought into connection with the faith of the reader in order to gain import for him; their point lies no longer in religious

principle and moral axiom, but throughout them all the Person of Jesus Himself, and this in all its superhuman glory, ever stands as the centre of interest. They are narrated, not as in the reminiscences of St Peter in order to explain the words of our Lord, but because of His deeds compared with which His words are only of subordinate moment. Deep interest is shown in the miraculous; in most of the stories the miracle itself is the central object. This is more or less so in i. 40–45, x. 46–52, ix. 14–29; it is completely so in case of the two miracles of Healing where even the manipulation used by our Lord is described (vii. 32–37, viii. 22–26); so also in the summaries of miracles iii. 9–12, vi. 53–56; likewise in the three great miracles, iv. 35–v. 43, which are intended to prove the power of Jesus over the forces of nature, the world of demons, and death; in the two miracles of Feeding (vi. 33–44, viii. 1–10), which show how He could provide for His people; in the Walking on the Sea (vi. 45–52), which shows Him passing unharmed through

the storms of time and over the waves of death; in the transfiguration (ix. 2–13), in which the glory of the Resurrection casts back its radiance upon the Christ yet living on earth. We cannot but see that these passages are governed by a strong Christological interest which supplants all other interests, religious or moral. These stories, moreover, even in their wording often remind us vividly of very similar narratives of the Old Testament (*cf.* iv. 35–41 with Jonah 1; v. 2 with Isaiah lxv. 4 *f.*; v. 7 with 1 Kings xvii. 18; v. 21–43 with 1 Kings xvii. 22, 2 Kings iv.; vi. 45–52 with Exodus xiv. 15–31, 2 Kings ii. 8, 14).

The evangelist has inserted only a few passages containing records of our Lord's teaching. These are, however, broad in style, and not free from so-called casuistry, *i.e.* they go much into the details of conduct: *e.g.* vii. 1–23, x. 1–12; with these is connected in spirit the allegorical interpretation of the four kinds of ground in the parable of the Sower (iv. 10–20). In addition to these we have a passage,

xiii. 7–27, which surely had its original home in Jewish apocalyptic circles, and has been inserted in the midst of genuine words of our Lord (its own context, indeed, being broken by the genuine words of verses 9–13); also a legend concerning the death of the Baptist, which certainly had its origin in the circle of his followers, and is here narrated in broad romantic style (vi. 17–29).

Nevertheless this gospel is, from the literary standpoint, an admirable performance. Its style betrays careful study of the Petrine reminiscences of St Mark. The stories due to the author are full of movement, of life, and of poetry. Above all, the construction of the whole work is extraordinarily happy. The author divides his abundant and varied material at first between two periods of ministry in Galilee (chaps. i.–ix.) and in Judæa (chaps. x.–xiv.). In the first part, as one can scarcely fail to notice, the development of the circle of disciples forms the principle of sectional division. The first section (i. 16–

iii. 6) is marked by the call of St Peter and the other fishermen to follow Jesus (i. 16–20). It contains two groups of narrative which stand in direct contrast with one another and are both taken from the reminiscences of St Peter. The first gives a bright and harmonious description of the overwhelming impression made by our Lord in the course of the first Sabbath at Capernaum (i. 21-39); the second, full of bitter controversy, pictures the opposition of those who were ill-disposed to Jesus (ii. 1–iii. 6). The two groups are bound together by the short isolated story of the cure of a leper (i. 40–44), of which the chief purpose is to show our Lord's correct conduct. The second section is marked by the completion of the roll of the Twelve, and contains three groups of narratives in which the first and third again stand in direct contrast with one another. The first, again a Petrine passage, recounts the malicious charges brought against our Lord by the Scribes from Jerusalem, and the thoughtless anxiety of our Lord's own

relatives (iii. 20–35). The second group, an edited Petrine passage, presents our Lord's parables concerning the growth of the kingdom of God in order to explain why it was that His mission did not everywhere meet with success (iv. 1–34). The third group, evidently felt by the evangelist to be the glorious culminating point of his gospel, and therefore distinguished by the richest colouring, is his own composition, and contains miracles showing our Lord's power over nature, the demon-world, and death (iv. 35–v. 43). The third Galilean section, marked by the successful mission of the Twelve which stands in contrast to our Lord's ill-success in Nazareth (vi. 1–32), describes Jesus at the highest point of His influence over the masses (vi. 1–viii. 26). It falls into two parallel cycles (vi. 33–vii. 37 and viii. 1–26). Both of these begin with a miracle of Feeding (vi. 33–44, viii. 1–10), and conclude with a miracle of Healing which is to be kept private (vii. 32–37, viii. 22–26). In the midst of both stands a conflict with Jewish ideas (vii. 1–23, viii. 11–12). In

both cases a narrative is given of a crossing of the sea, the first time combined with the walking on the sea (vi. 45–53), the second time with the discourse concerning leaven (viii. 14–21). Into the first cycle is, moreover, inserted the story of the Syro-phenician woman (vii. 24–31), probably the only narrative derived from the Petrine reminiscences that occurs in this part of the gospel. The fourth section, marked by the Messianic confession of the Twelve (viii. 27–30), pictures our Lord's private ministry among His faithful followers, wherein His prophecy of His death and of His second coming forms the chief point of interest (viii. 27–ix. 50). Here also it seems probable that, with the possible exception of ix. 33–37, 38–40, no Petrine passages occur. In ix. 41–50 we find a collection of remnants which could not be used in the rest of the composition, and are set here side by side.

The second main division is devoted to events which took place in Judæa and Jerusalem. Here the nature of the subject demanded

chronological arrangement. And yet even within the chronological scheme are found groups—certainly Petrine in origin—in which similarity of subject matter forms the sole bond of union. The first section describes the journey to Jerusalem (x. 1–45); into it are taken up the Petrine narratives which deal with the conditions of entry into the kingdom of God (x. 13–31). The second section describes the days in Jerusalem (xi. 1–xii. 44), with a scene in Jericho as an introduction (x. 46–52), wherein the Messianic address and the cure of a blind man are a typical forecast of the story which follows. Accurately speaking, the narrative of continuous events comprises only x. 46–xii. 12. The Evangelist with exquisite tact assigns to Jerusalem, and adds here a Petrine group of controversies concerning religious and political questions (xii. 13–44). The third section is formed by a discourse upon the Last Things (xiii.), the only long composition of the kind in this gospel, and this, as we have before conjectured, has a Petrine passage (xiii. 1–6,

28–36) for its nucleus. Finally, there follows a fourth section containing a continuous history of the Passion, which has a double significance as the close of the earthly Life and as the necessary condition of the apocalyptic events foretold in the third section. How far the Evangelist is here indebted to the Petrine reminiscences we have no means of deciding.

For a first attempt to combine in a complete whole the isolated written and oral reminiscences of the public ministry of our Lord current at the time, this gospel is a most masterly performance. Though the author, as was only natural, can no longer assign to each separate tradition its right place in the chronological order of events, he still knows the epochs of the ministry and their characteristics and has been admirably guided in his arrangement of his material. That he has incorporated so few of the discourses of our Lord into his work is evidently due to the fact that he knew of the existence of St Matthew's

compilation. His purpose in writing is obvious: he would gather together the broken fragments that still remained of the time-worn image of the public life of our Lord and would combine them into a whole. The considerations which principally moved him in this undertaking disclose themselves clearly in his choice and arrangement of material. They are the questions: How came it that Messiah must die? What guarantee have we that Jesus was really Messiah? What is the history of the origin of the little band of believers, and what may they expect from their Master?—These are no subtile questions of dogma, they were vital questions of faith.

The name of the author of this most ancient of continuous gospels has not been preserved for us. He has been cast into the shade by the writer of those Petrine reminiscences which form the nucleus of his work. Hence it has been called ever since we first hear of it, "The Gospel according to Mark"—where the

word "according," as in the title "History according to Herodotus," is of course used to denote St Mark as the author. The place of origin is doubtless the same as that wherein the real Mark had written his Petrine reminiscences—namely, Rome. That the author had in his eye readers unacquainted with Jewish affairs is shown by the explanation he gives of Aramaic words and Jewish customs (iii. 17–22; v. 41; vii. 3*f.*, 11–34; ix. 43; x. 46; xiv. 12–36; xv. 6, 22, 34–42.) We meet also with Latin words throughout the gospel not only in the Petrine passages (ii. 4, 9, 11, 23; xii. 14, 42), but also in v. 9, 15; vi. 27, 37, 55; vii. 4; xiv. 5; xv. 15, 39, 44, 45. We cannot fix the date of this gospel, but there is no ground for placing it much after the fall of Jerusalem, which seems to be presupposed in xiii. 24, where the more indefinite expression "in those days" has replaced the certainly more ancient word "immediately" which is preserved in St Matthew xxiv. 29.

### 4. The Gospel according to St Luke.

It was inevitable that after a short time a further literary want should make itself felt in Christian circles—namely, the desire to possess St Matthew's collection of sayings combined together in one book with the description of the public ministry of our Lord as given in the Gospel of St Mark. In two localities this want was supplied. Our Gospel of St Luke forms one of the two attempts. The preface (i. 1–4) marks its author as by profession a literary man; for the custom of beginning a book by instructing the reader in its literary principles and aims was very frequent among authors of those days. He is moreover a writer with real feeling for correctness and unity of style; he also shows sure mastery of his very extensive material. Speaking generally, he works up the Gospel of St Mark and St Matthew's Logia into one whole. Yet he has collected and incorporated in his gospel a great abundance of further material.

Whether, and to what extent, this lay before him in writing it is scarcely possible to decide; for the three writings concerning the Life of our Lord already mentioned would suffice to justify the statement (i. 1) that already many had taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which had been fulfilled among Christians. The fact that it was possible to work those two chief sources together into one consistent whole is a fresh proof of the trustworthiness of these original documents in all essential points. Our author has only found it necessary to revise the style; indeed even here he seems to have been influenced by the deepest feelings of reverence for the original wording. In his reproduction of narratives from the Gospel of St Mark, apart from the introduction (i. 1–5) which he could no longer use side by side with his own introductory narratives, he has omitted only a few isolated phrases—either because they had no longer any interest for a later generation out of touch with Judaism, as for instance

the name of the high priest in David's time (St Mark ii. 25), or because the description seemed to him somewhat diffuse. On the other hand there are often whole passages of St Mark which he has not incorporated in his work, but in each case the reason of omission is easily discernible and quite justifies his action. He passes over the Beelzebub controversy (St Mark iii. 20–30) because he preferred the account of the same event given in St Matthew's Logia, which he gives at xi. 15–32; he omits the petition of the sons of Zebedee (St Mark x. 35–45) and the anointing in Bethany (St Mark xiv. 3–11), because he considers them replaced by the controversy concerning who is the greatest (xxii. 24–30) and the anointing by the woman who was a sinner (vii. 36–50); he neglects the two controversies concerning the Jewish law of divorce (St Mark x. 1–12) and concerning the greatest commandment in the Law (St Mark xii. 28–34), because they seemed of interest only for Jews, and because, in case of the

latter at least, he had a substitute in the introduction to his parable of the good Samaritan (x. 25–28). He has likewise omitted St Mark i. 12 *f.*, 16–20; vi. 1–6, because his introductory composition, iv. 1–v. 11, has replaced them. It strikes us as more strange that he passes over a whole group of narratives, St Mark vi. 45–viii. 26; but even here it is not hard to perceive his reason. The miracles of Walking upon the Sea and the Feeding of the Four Thousand (vi. 45–52, viii. 1–10) seemed to him unnecessary beside the Stilling of the Storm and the Feeding of the Five Thousand; the controversy concerning purification (vii. 1–29) again had interest only for Jews; the matter of the Syro-phenician woman (vii. 24–30) might give offence to Gentiles; the demand for a sign (viii. 11–13) and the warning against leaven (viii. 14–21) were known to him in another context (St Luke xi. 29, xii. 1); and, finally, the two miracles of healing (vii. 31–38, viii. 22–26) had parallels enough elsewhere in his work. In conclusion, he has passed over

the collection of fragmentary traditions in St Mark ix. 41–50; for verse 50 he possessed a substitute which is found in the Logia (St Luke xiv. 34).

On the other hand, he has occasionally inserted words or phrases into the narratives of St Mark, evidently as embellishments of the fixed tradition; it is, however, worthy of note that episodes such as those of xxii. 15, 35–38, 44, 51; xxiii. 6–12, 27–31, 39–43, 46, besides the episode of the strife as to who is the greatest (xxii. 24–30) already mentioned, are introduced only into the history of the Passion. Finally, Pilate's declarations concerning our Lord's innocence, in chap. xxiii., are essentially augmented. Similarly, the Preaching of the Baptist is enriched by the passage iii. 10–14.

If our restoration of St Matthew's Logia is correct, that work has suffered much less change in the hands of our author—again leaving out of consideration improvement of style. In this case it is not easy to give

proof in detail because we no longer possess the original document, which has moreover been more severely edited in our Gospel of St Matthew than in St Luke. It is possible that St Luke sometimes interpolates, but it is just as possible that our St Matthew has omitted a passage in question. On the other hand St Luke may have sometimes passed over certain words, but it is also possible that our St Matthew may have added them. The fact that St Luke, in incorporating this document into his gospel, has only divided it into two sections, predisposes us to take a favourable view of his reverent treatment of this venerable record. The first and smaller section is found at vi. 17–vii. 35, where the Beelzebub story of St Mark is omitted. The larger section (ix. 51–xvii. 37) is inserted after the whole Galilean ministry of our Lord, according to St Mark, has been brought to a conclusion by St Luke.

The material which the Evangelist has himself collected has for the most part been inserted

not in the continuous narrative of the Gospel of St Mark, but within the two interpolations from the Logia. Here he shows most admirable literary tact in his choice of position. Thus the Raising of the Widow's Son of Nain (vii. 11–17) is made to serve as a climax to the Cure of the Centurion's Servant of Capernaum, and the Woman who was a Sinner (vii. 36–49) forms a parallel figure to the Gentile Centurion and the Doubting Baptist. The Evangelist now continues with a list (viii. 1–3), that had come down to him, of other women who followed our Lord, among whom the Magdalene appears—a figure nearly related to the woman who was a sinner. Before the beginning of the second interpolation he inserts the narrative of our Lord's rejection by a Samaritan village (ix. 51–56); the parable of the good Samaritan and the story of Mary (x. 25–42) are placed after the sending forth of the Disciples, evidently because they afforded patterns of discipleship; the two narratives are, besides, related to one another in that the chief subject

of each is contrasted in the one case with the Priest and Levite, in the other with Martha. No reason can be shown for the insertion of the Healing on the Sabbath-day after the parable of the Fig Tree (xiii. 10–17). But when the Evangelist inserts a number of discourses at meals before the parable of the Great Supper (xiv. 1–14), it is possible that he was partly influenced by the popular symposia of Greek literature—dialogues, that is, which were given in the form of table-talk. Before the last sections of the Collection of Sayings he then inserts a collection of parables (chaps. xv. and xvi.), the position being determined by the nature of their subject matter; also the sections xvii. 5 *f.*, 7–10, 11–19, which, like the similar collection of fragments in the Gospel of St Mark, seem to have no clear connection with one another. Before he again takes up the thread of our St Mark he interpolates yet two other parables, both concerned with the subject of prayer—the Importunate Widow and the Penitent Publican (xviii. 1–14). In

the passages which follow from St Mark he only interpolates the Zaccheus story because it belongs to Jericho, and in connection with this a last parable concerning entrusted wealth (xix. 1–27). Finally, at the conclusion of the Gospel of St Mark he completes the story of the empty sepulchre by the addition of his Resurrection-narratives (xxiv. 13–53), besides describing the appearance of a second angel at the grave.

These Resurrection-narratives have a very definite aim. They are intended to establish the truth of the Lord's Resurrection by a genuinely antique demonstration of its truly corporal nature in spite of all the spirituality shown by the appearance and disappearance of His body (xxiv. 15 *f.*, 30 *f.*, 36, 51); they aim also at explaining the problem of the Death (26 *f.*, 44–46), and bear witness to the Apostles' commission to preach the Gospel to all nations (47 *f.*). The beginning of the gospel is likewise enriched by some stories from the Childhood of our Lord (chaps. i.–ii.).

Then follows, in correspondence with St Mark, the introduction of our Lord to His active mission (chap. iii.). Here St Luke shows his wish to give our Lord's life its right place in universal history by the chronological notice of iii. 1 *f.*—a passage which is quite unique in the gospels and is due to the Evangelist's own research. He has also amplified the story of the Baptist and continued it up to his imprisonment (iii. 3–20). To the proof of the Divine Sonship, given at our Lord's Baptism (iii. 21 *f.*), he adds the proof of His descent from Adam—*i.e.* of His incorporation among the successive generations of mankind (iii. 23–28). Then, and thereby proving himself an artist who understands his art, he inserts four great program-compositions as a prelude to his reproduction of the narrative of his authorities. These are intended to inform the reader as to the lines upon which the following history moves. The first pictures our Lord's rejection of the temptation to false views of the Messiahship (iv. 1–13)—it is a

substitute for St Mark i. 12*f.*; the second, a substitute for St Mark vi. 1–6, justifies the view of Messiahship taken by our Lord (iv. 16–30); the third, by means of the Sabbath in Capernaum from the Petrine reminiscences, describes the kind of success which crowned our Lord's mission and the means He employed therein (iv. 31–44); while the fourth prophesies the success of the disciples in their mission to the world (v. 1–11), and replaces St Mark i. 16–20. We have here conscious literary composition in sharp contrast to the naïve art of the Gospel of St Mark.

This survey shows that the passages which have been first added by the Evangelist are chiefly parables. He is also answerable for numerous embellishments of the narratives of his sources, but only very few new narratives are due to him. With the exception of xvii. 5 *f.*, short sayings are entirely wanting in his new material. As regards the subject matter of his additions, it is remarkable that we find among them no fewer than three passages

concerned with Samaritans (ix. 51–56, x. 25–37, xvii. 11–19), three with sinners (vii. 36–50, xviii. 9–14, xix. 1–10), and three with women (vii. 36–50, viii. 1–3, x. 38–42).

This brings us to the question of the peculiar interests of this gospel. The author has a large heart. He loves to dwell upon passages which show the large-heartedness of Jesus, His converse with Samaritans, sinners, women of every sort, and His success with them. Doctrinal interests are nothing to him. He has made no considerable addition to the collection of sayings of our Lord; on the other hand, his artistic soul rejoices in the parables of Jesus, probably also embellishes them. At all events the parables we owe to him are the richest in descriptive colouring that are preserved in the gospels. Although he finds edification in miracles and is disposed to paint the miraculous as realistically as possible (for instance, he expressly mentions that at the Baptism of our Lord the dove appeared in bodily form), yet he has only contributed one new miracle, the

Raising of the Young Man at Nain—though this is, of course, especially wonderful.

Our author may be called the poet-painter among the evangelists. We owe to him narratives of brilliant colouring and finish, such as The woman who was a sinner; Mary and Martha; The preaching at Nazareth; The draught of fishes; The disciples of Emmaus; Symeon in the Temple; and—the most glorious of all—The Birth of our Lord. The legend of the childhood of the Baptist, with its reminiscences of similar stories from the Old Testament and showing everywhere signs of translation from a Semitic tongue, together with other contributions to the history of the life and teaching of the Baptist, was most probably derived from those disciples of St John concerning whom our author has something to tell us in Acts xviii. 24–xix. 7. This legend has, moreover, undoubtedly influenced the form of the story of the Birth and Childhood of our Lord, with which it is closely connected in the gospel. Many of his narratives are parallel to passages

in St Mark which have become changed in course of oral transmission. Such are the two miracles of healing on the Sabbath-day, and probably the story of the woman who was a sinner. The legend of the young man of Nain is the masculine doublet of the "Daughter of Jairus" in St Mark, and is strongly influenced by the narrative of Elisha's miracle at Shunem (2 Kings iv. 17–37).

This gospel is of all the richest in material, the most varied in colouring, the most correct in style; it is the expression of a heart open to, and full of regard for, the Gentile world; it is free from all disposition to theorise, it is full of poetry and feeling. And yet it is the gospel which gives us the least clear insight into the course of the public ministry of our Lord. This object, indeed, was not within the purpose of the author; he is dominated by his desire to allow the original documents to speak as much as possible for themselves, inserting only whatever he could collect from other tradition. This faithful dependence upon the

original documents, which leads the author to make no effort to give unity and historical development to his work, appears to be due not entirely to feelings of reverence. Rather, the preface leads us to recognise that the Evangelist in the composition of his gospel aimed at affording to non-Christians of high social standing, who for one reason or another interested themselves in the Christian movement, information as trustworthy and complete as possible concerning the real character and objects of this movement. For the epithet applied to Theophilus, to whom the work is dedicated—an epithet which may be rendered by our word 'excellent'—marks him not only as a non-Christian (a Christian would be addressed as 'brother' or 'beloved'), but also as a person of high station. Closer investigation of the second part of the work of our author—namely, the Acts of the Apostles, a continuation of the gospel—will give further information upon this point. Here we may only conclude that the gospel

was written for non-Christians, with the aim of laying the facts before them as completely and reliably and yet in as pleasing and artistic a shape as possible.

Also for the solution of the last question which now concerns us, wherein the gospel itself affords us no assistance, the question, namely, of the place and time of writing, we are directed to the Acts for an answer; its consideration therefore must be deferred to a later occasion. Then also we shall explain why it is that the gospel has taken the name of St Luke. The gospel itself betrays, by its vivid and detailed prophecies of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem (xix. 42–44; xxi. 20, 24)—traits which are peculiar to itself—that the city already lay in ashes; and it shows by a similarly vivid description of the persecution of Christians (vi. 22) that many actual experiences are here related. Finally, the careful style of this gospel favours the hypothesis that it was composed in an environment of Greek culture.

### 5. The Gospel according to St Matthew.

A second combination of the Gospel of St Mark with St Matthew's Logia is given in the gospel which takes its name from the latter apostle. The method of combination is different from that of St Luke's Gospel, yet it is in its way still more interesting. The author of the Gospel according to St Matthew has himself also collected and added other material to the two original documents, though indeed to a much less extent than St Luke. The construction of the first thirteen chapters is a peculiarity of his gospel. From this point—speaking accurately, from xiii. 53—he closely follows the thread of the Gospel of St Mark. In the second part of his work we can therefore perceive most clearly the principles which governed his treatment of his authority. We see that he was but little moved by the desire to improve its phraseology. Many of its narratives were however much too long for him, and he has accord-

ingly strictly curtailed them. Only occasionally has he inserted material of his own into this second part of his work. These interpolations consist for the most part of parables—xviii. 23–35, xx. 1–16, and the three parables of chap. xxv. But they also include a single complete narrative, a legend of St Peter (xvii. 24–27), together with two other legends concerning St Peter—namely, his walking on the sea (xiv. 28–31), and the word to him concerning the rock and the keys of the kingdom of Heaven (xvi. 17–19), both of which have been incorporated in narratives already given in St Mark. The directions for the government of the Church in xviii. 15–20, and some of the woes against the Pharisees which have been placed together in chap. xxiii., are also due to our Evangelist. It is remarkable how much of what he adds to the history of the Passion is manifestly legendary in character—such as The dream of Pilate's wife as a sign of the innocence of our Lord; The washing of Pilate's hands as a sign of the

innocence of the governor; The appearance in the streets of Jerusalem of those that had risen from their graves after the death of Jesus; The Sealing of the stone and the Setting a watch over the grave, and the terrible end of the Traitor. Nor is there much that is valuable or beautiful in these legendary accretions. It is indeed obvious that in the place where this gospel was written nothing was really known concerning the life of our Lord beyond what was given in the two original authorities.

But the first thirteen chapters really give this gospel its peculiar character and significance. In these we are introduced to an author who has a sure mastery of his material, and yet deals with it pretty freely in order to serve his own ends. These ends are unmistakably doctrinal in character; indeed, these thirteen chapters might be called a catechism of the Life of our Lord. They begin (chaps. i.–ii.) with a story of the infancy which greatly varies from that of St Luke, and is attached to a genealogy from Abraham to Jesus again

different from that of St Luke; then follows a description of our Lord's introduction to His public ministry (chaps. iii.–iv.), which falls into three main divisions—The appearance of the Baptist, The Baptism, and The Temptation of Jesus (iii. 1–iv. 11)—and closes with a passage, forming the transition to what follows and containing a short notice of the scene (iv. 12–17), the chief witnesses (iv. 18–22), and the extent and character (iv. 23–25) of our Lord's activity. Now come five great compositions dealing with:—Our Lord's teaching (chaps. v.–vii.), His acts (viii. 1–ix. 34), His disciples (ix. 35–x. 42), His opponents (chap. xi. *f.*), The kingdom of Heaven (chap. xiii.). Each of these compositions shows an arrangement that has been well thought out.

The first composition (chaps. v.–vii.), called from the scenery of its setting The Sermon on the Mount, is disposed according to the laws which Rhetoric prescribes for such a discourse. It has an exordium, intended to gain the interest of the hearers, consisting of a

promise (v. 3–22) and an admonition (13–16). It has a corresponding conclusion which consists of a series of admonitions: an exhortation to choose the right way (vii. 13 *f.*), a warning against false prophets (vii. 15–20), against false security (vii. 21–23), and a parable which vividly emphasises the importance of showing forth Christ's teaching in a Christian life (vii. 24–27). The main body of the discourse is a kind of fundamental code for Christians dealing first with life in society (v. 17–48), then with the life of piety (vi. 1–18), then with the right attitude towards earthly things (vi. 19–34). Then follows a number of separate rules of conduct culminating in the precept: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you even so do ye also unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." This composition has been and is the Magna Charta of Christianity.

The second composition (chaps. viii.-ix.) illustrates our Lord's active ministry by means of four groups of three stories. The introductory

and concluding groups (viii. 1–17 and ix. 18–34) both of them contain three accounts of miracles; the two middle groups consist respectively of three narratives dealing with our Lord's victory over obstacles of social life, over the forces of nature and of the spirit world (viii. 18–34); and of three records of occasions upon which He gave offence by breaking the laws of religious and social custom (ix. 1–17). Among these twelve stories only one narrative is found which is peculiar to St Matthew, namely, the Cure of the blind men (ix. 27–31), and this upon close investigation seems only a variant of the narrative of the Blind man of Bethsaida in the Gospel of St Mark (St Mark viii. 22–26). The choice and arrangement of material shows that the miracles of our Lord are now felt to be of surpassing interest.

The third composition (chap. x.), like the first, reproduces a continuous discourse together with an introduction which describes the situation (ix. 35–x. 4). It begins with rules for the conduct of the disciples (x. 5–15);

then follows a prophecy of their fate (16–25) and a promise of protection and reward (26–33). Then, as in the first composition, there follows an appendix containing a number of separate principles and rules (34–42). It is a Breviary for Christian missionaries.

The fourth composition (chaps. xi.–xii.) describes the attitude towards our Lord of different circles of the people—of the Baptist and his disciples (xi. 2–19), of the Galilean cities (20–24), of the leaders of the nation (25–30). Then the causes of our Lord's ill success are made clear in two narratives of Sabbath controversies (xii. 1–14). Finally, after the quotation of a prophecy from the Old Testament which is intended to confirm the faith of the readers, the composition culminates in an account of monstrous charges against Jesus and unbelieving demands made of Him, together with His refutation and rejection of the same (xii. 22–50).

The last composition (chap. xiii.) consists of seven parables, of which the first two, the

Good and Bad Ground and the Tares among the Wheat, describe the causes of failure; the two next, the Mustard seed and the Leaven, describe the insignificance of the beginnings of Christianity, and teach that this should not form an obstacle to faith; the two following, the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl without Price, emphasise the incomparable worth of the kingdom; while the last, the Draw-net, describes the final separation of good and evil.

The author of these compositions is without doubt a born teacher. His arrangement, by which the reader gains an insight into the Life of our Lord from every standpoint, is masterly in the extreme. But he is also a most skilful artist. Out of the scattered material of his two sources, with the addition of what he has himself collected, he has created a whole which is consistent and complete in itself. The greater part of the material which he has himself contributed is incorporated in the first composition; thus the greater part of v. 17–48 is his, though it is most aptly fitted

into the first discourse of St Matthew's Logia as found practically in its original form in St Luke vi. 20–36; again, the section vi. 1–18 is his, except for the insertion of the Lord's Prayer from the Logia (St Luke xi. 2–4), which here disturbs the context; and finally, the short sayings of vi. 34; vii. 6, 15. The rest is derived from the Logia, though there it is often found in different context and with different significance. In the second composition (chaps. viii.–ix.) he uses in free rotation passages from both his sources. The first isolated narrative of the Gospel of St Mark (i. 40–44) precedes the first of the Logia (St Luke vii. 2–10). The author then turns back to the account of the Sabbath in Capernaum and takes from it the Cure of St Peter's wife's mother with other cures (St Mark i. 29–34). Then comes a narrative from the Logia (St Luke ix. 57–60), then two connected narratives from St Mark (St Mark iv. 36–v. 17) which are here separated from a third (St Mark v. 22–43), which is connected with

them in St Mark by three other connected Markan narratives (St Mark ii. 1–22). Then after the Cure of two blind men, which is peculiar to the Evangelist, the series closes with a narrative from the Logia (St Luke xi. 14 *f.*). We here catch at once the Evangelist's method of procedure. In chap. x. the sayings, x. 16, 23, 25 *b.*, alone cannot be found in St Mark or the Logia. In the first part (x. 1–15) we have a compilation of the two descriptions of the sending forth of the disciples in St Mark vi. 7–13 and in the Logia (St Luke x. 1–12). Then follows, framed between the two sayings peculiar to this gospel, a section found in St Mark xiii. 9–13, then a saying belonging to the Logia (St Luke vi. 40) which was passed over in St Matthew v. because it referred to the disciples, and then again a saying peculiar to the gospel (St Matt. x. 25 *b.*); the discourse continues with passages from the Logia—St Luke xii. 2–9, 51–53; xiv. 26 *f.*; xvii. 33. It seems as if the Evangelist had first marked all

the sayings in the Logia referring to disciples and had then collected them together at this place. He now returns to the conclusion (St Luke x. 16) of the section of the Logia which forms the nucleus of this passage, attaching to it a variant of the same saying which is peculiar to himself (verse 41), and concluding with another saying (verse 42) referring to disciples from the collection of fragments incorporated into the Gospel of St Mark (St Mark ix. 41). The rest of the passage of the Logia which the Evangelist has here taken as the nucleus of his composition, namely St Luke x. 13–15, together with the following passage (St Luke x. 21 *f.*), he reserves for his next composition (chaps. xi.–xii.). There he attaches these verses to the section concerning the Baptist—likewise derived from the Logia (St Luke vii. 18–35)—and adds to them a saying again peculiar to this gospel (St Matt. xi. 28–30). In chap. xii. he amplifies the two Sabbath stories of St Mark ii. 23–iii. 6 by a saying which accords with St Luke xiv. 5, and then uses St Mark iii. 7 as an

introduction to St Matt. xii. 15–21—a passage of his own composition. He now, in reproducing the Beelzebub controversy, repeats in a particularly instructive way the method we have already noticed him adopt in dealing with material presented in both his authorities. He dovetails the two accounts of St Mark iii. 22–29 and St Luke xi. 15–23 into one another, combining with them the sayings of St Luke xii. 10 and St Luke vi. 43–45—both from the Logia—and adding verses 36 *f.*—again his own property. In verses 38–42 he follows the Logia (St Luke xi. 29–32), and concludes with verses 43–45 from St Luke xi. 24–26 and verses 46–50 from St Mark iii. 31–35.

Exactly the same method of work is shown in chap. xiii. To a Markan passage (St Mark iv. 1–20), into which he now inserts St Luke x. 23 *f.* from the Logia, he adds a parable of his own discovering (xiii. 24–30); to this, after the fashion of his Markan exemplar, he affixes an interpretation (xiii. 36–43). Into the pair of parables derived from the Logia

(St Luke xiii. 18–21) he works a variant of the first, occurring in St Mark iv. 30–32, and adds St Mark iv. 33 *f.* The three concluding parables (xiii. 44–52) we again owe to the Evangelist's own zeal as a collector.

The fact that the same method can be clearly traced in all these compositions conclusively proves that we have here given a correct explanation of the procedure of the Evangelist in compiling his gospel.

When we survey the Evangelist's own contributions we find, as with St Luke, that they consist principally of parables; though in contrast to St Luke they also include a fair number of sayings, indeed some longer discourses (v. 17 *ff.*, vi. 1 *ff.*, xxiii. 1 *ff.*). The latter probably came down to him in writing, and perhaps from Palestine itself. The first point is certain at least in the case of vi. 1 *ff.*, because the Evangelist disturbs the original construction of the passage by the interpolation of the Lord's Prayer. The latter point is probable because of the nature of the

subject matter, more especially of vi. 1 *ff.* and xxiii. 1 *ff.* The scenery, the characters, the interests, and the tendency of these passages are entirely Palestinian.

The Evangelist of this doctrinal gospel is in many respects inferior to the authors of the other two gospels that have come down to us. All feeling for poetry seems to have been wanting in him. In describing the history of the infancy of Jesus it would hardly be possible to choose a more prosaic style than that of our Evangelist in his first two chapters. Vivid imagery, such as that we owe to the authors of St Luke and St Mark, is not to be found in this compendium of rules for the Christian Life. His narratives also are deficient in movement and colour. He cuts away as superfluous all which seems to him purely ornamental in a story. The characters, too, are no longer clearly realised. Sadducees, for instance, appear where in reality they are quite out of place (xvi. 1, 6, 11 *f.*). Again, he has no interest in the historical connection of events.

He tears all asunder in order that he may place similar sayings and stories each in its appropriate pigeon-hole. His gospel is wanting in all sense of historical development. Jesus appears from the very first as Messiah. He is publicly proclaimed as Messiah by the voice at the Baptism, wherein the pronoun of the second person is replaced by one of the third; the problem of the Messiahship therefore accompanies Him from the very first step of His ministry. The occasions of the utterances of our Lord are to St Matthew matters of indifference. If sayings agree in their main tenor he places them together—as, for instance, xi. 20–24, 25–30. He takes no thought whether a saying is declared by its theme to have been intended only for the private circle of the disciples or for wider publicity; he simply places it where it is in a good context according to the sense. We find in him no feeling for the point where legendary accretion becomes worthless from a religious point of view. He loves to arrange his material

according to numerical system; thus his Lord's Prayer has seven petitions, his first composition has seven Beatitudes as an introduction, his last composition consists of seven parables. In other ways also the life which he paints has no longer its proper movement; the figures of the disciples are on their way to become conventionalised pictures of saints, while the other characters tend to be drawn in bare outline.

Though it is true that doctrinal considerations form the exclusive interest of the Evangelist, this does not imply that he has any interest in questions of dogma. He is untouched by the problems and controversies that centred in the person of St Paul. That the Gospel is intended for all nations is for him a matter of course; it is emphasised both at the commencement and the conclusion of his gospel in the Wise men of the East (chap. ii.) and in the Missionary commission (xxviii. 19 *f.*). The claim of the Jewish Law is not even discussed. Both Law and Prophets are

authoritative—but only in their Christian interpretation—in the first place as documents prophetic of the Life of Jesus whose Messiahship is demonstrated by the fulfilment of prophecy, and then as witnesses to the simple moral principles of Christianity (vii. 12, xxii. 39 *f.*). These moral principles alone interest the author. Our Lord himself becomes for him an exalted teacher of morality, and from this point of view his gospel is simply perfect. And yet in his Sermon on the Mount the Gospel, the joyful tidings which find expression only in the introduction, is replaced by a new Law though it be ever so spiritual. This impression is fully confirmed by the conclusion of the gospel, again an instance of the literary art of the author, who here gives a brilliant summary of his whole conception of Christianity. If the last testament of the glorified Lord here runs: "Make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"

(xxviii. 19 *f.*), this of itself shows that according to the conception of the Evangelist our Lord's mission was to give commandments. But in other points also our gospel moves along the path which ended in Catholicism. The beginnings of the fixed formularies of Catholicism may be traced in the formula for Baptism just mentioned, though it be only a consistent development of the thought of St Paul. Our gospel also has already attained to the conception of an organised Christian Church; it establishes for the Church a kind of statute law, and gives to the Apostles a kind of absolute priestly authority (xvi. 18 *f.*, xviii. 15–20). In this connection a peculiar light is cast upon the three legends of St Peter testifying as they do to the growth of reverence for the person of the Apostle; he is even represented almost side by side with our Lord (*cf.* xvii. 27 "for me and thee"). Thus this gospel marks the close of the primitive Christian development of gospel literature. Even if it shows acquaintance with Pauline epistles, it no longer

knows St Paul. His spirit is alien to it though his language may be employed here and there. It points onward to the development towards Catholicism; hence it became the chief gospel, the work which took the lead in guiding this development, and in so far no book ever written is of greater historical importance. We Protestant Christians of to-day ought however to recognise that we can gain from St Mark and St Luke a surer knowledge of the essential nature of the gospel message than from this Roman gospel of the third generation.

For Rome may be surely claimed as the home of this work. It stands in the closest relationship with the most ancient documents of Roman Christianity—with the First Epistle of St Peter, with the Epistle to the Ephesians, and with the Pastoral Epistles (if we omit the Pauline element in these), and then more especially with the epistle of the Roman Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas, also with the Epistle of St James, though the Roman origin of the latter epistle is not certain. Its close depend-

ence upon the certainly Roman Gospel of St Mark also speaks in favour of its Roman origin. Its date cannot be even approximately given; it may have been written before the end, it may also have been written within two decades after the end of the first century. We are, however, by no means compelled to adopt the later date. The want of acquaintance with the Gospel of St Luke shown in St Matthew, favours the assumption that the two gospels were fairly contemporary in origin.

In St Matthew, Rome lays her hand upon the gospel which had been handed down to her from St Peter. In this gospel the Roman spirit triumphs over the Pauline, the legal over the religious, the tendency to look backward over that to look forward; finally, if we trace back these opposing principles to their original sources, Peter triumphs over Paul and the historical Jesus over the metaphysical Christ.

# III

# THE POST-PAULINE LITERATURE

## Survey

Our discussion of the development of the gospel literature has already brought us into the midst of the literary labour of the generation which succeeded the death of St Peter and St Paul and the downfall of Jerusalem. This active occupation with the material of the Gospel story shows us, however, only one line along which the interest of this generation moved. Another phase of interest is represented by a second group of writings which are in character mutually related. To these we must now turn our attention. They are in the first place the writings which appear in the New Testament under the names Acts of the Apostles, Epistle to the Hebrews, First Epistle

of St Peter, Epistle to the Ephesians. In somewhat looser connection with this group stand the so-called Pastoral Epistles. The fact that in these writings the form of Jesus and the outlines of His life come more clearly into view than with St Paul, betrays that they were composed during the epoch of gospel literature. Traces of literary dependence upon any of our gospels can, however, nowhere be discovered nor need we expect to find them; indeed, even in the Acts of the Apostles we can discover scarcely any trace of the Gospel of St Luke.

The majority of these productions are written in epistolary form. Strictly speaking, however, they are not real letters—that is, they were not called into being by the concrete needs of a particular moment of time. They read like sermons or lectures written down for a definite circle of readers which is described in the address. Even the Acts of the Apostles here affords an analogy in so far as this work, together with its first part the Gospel of St Luke, was composed for the circle of readers

represented by Theophilus. who is named in the dedication. Wherever an address is given it is accordingly fairly extensive in scope. The Epistle to the Hebrews has no address, and thus affords documentary evidence for the truth of our view expressed above concerning the two Pauline epistles which now appear in 2 Cor. x. 1–xiii. 10 and Rom. xvi. 1–20. We shall, however, see that this epistle was in all probability intended for the Christians of Italy. The First Epistle of St Peter is addressed to the Christians dwelling in all the provinces of Asia Minor (1 St. Pet. i. 1). In the original text of the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians every geographical limitation of the circle of recipients is wanting (i. 1), though it is probable that the communities of the province of Asia occupied the first place in the mind of the author. Even in case of the Pastoral Epistles whole provinces stand behind the persons to whom they are addressed. And just as the circle of recipients is larger, so also the interests which come to light in

these 'epistles' are of a more general description. They are not, like the epistles of St Paul, concerned with questions which occupy the attention of a single community at a particular period: they are written for every one and for all time. The one epistle of St Paul which in character most nearly approximates to these sermons in the form of epistles is the Epistle to the Romans. Their authors also are unknown. The fact that two of these epistles were sent forth under the name of the two great leaders of the first generation, St Peter and St Paul, and that genuine fragments of Pauline letters are used as the groundwork of the Pastoral Epistles, is characteristic of this literature. The same phenomenon is again presented by the Acts of the Apostles in the speeches which are placed in the mouths of St Peter, St Paul, and other heroes of the first generation. The authors of these epistles and of these speeches are men of dependent genius; they avail themselves of the literary artifice constantly employed in ancient days,

an artifice by which they speak to their own generation in the name or through the mouth of acknowledged masters of antiquity. No one in those days felt this practice to be unsuitable or dishonourable. It was, indeed, only feelings of modesty and reverence which led writers to adopt this disguise. The disciple sank his personality in that of his revered master and, as it were, lent his pen to his spirit; men wished to know what the master himself would have said were he yet present with them in the flesh. The disposition of mind which is thus betrayed marks the character of this generation—its want of spiritual independence, of self-confidence, and of creative power, together with the overpowering not to say oppressive sense of the unapproachable superiority of the great men of the first generation of Christians. Hence these writings afford us no sharply-defined picture of the character of their authors. They are not men of strong personal character and genius like St Peter and St Paul, who

impressed upon their creations the ineffaceable stamp of their spirit. One easily discerns of what spirit they were, but not their own personality.

But these writings are not only of similar character from the literary point of view. They are inwardly related to one another. The Epistle to the Hebrews has so many points of contact with the Acts of the Apostles that the opinion has been again and again advanced that they both had the same author. Again, the champions of the genuineness of the First Epistle of St Peter with good grounds point out its manifold relationship with the speeches of St Peter in the Acts; only its relationship with all the other speeches of this book, those of St Stephen and St Paul, is just as close. And the traits which distinguish the Epistle to the Ephesians from the real epistles of St Paul are just those which bring it into close connection with the Acts, also with the First Epistle of St Peter, indeed even with the Pastoral Epistles. In fact these four writings,

the Acts, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the First Epistle of St Peter, and the Epistle to the Ephesians, represent in the main the same conception of Christianity and the same interests. They show about the same measure of dependence upon St Paul and of deviation from his spirit—though the latter is in different directions—and they presuppose in the main the same relations within Christian circles.

The Pastoral Epistles vary somewhat from this type; yet they move on lines which, if carried back to St Paul, always pass through our group of writings.

The dates of these writings would seem to be about equally distant from the time of St Paul. All of them bear the marks of a bitter persecution. But there is no evidence that a widely-spread persecution of Christians occurred before the last years of Domitian, about 92–96 A.D., and we may be sure that some trace of such a persecution, if it occurred, would have been preserved in tradition. After Domitian the Christians again had rest until the last

years of Trajan. There is, however, no reason to adopt so late a date for these writings. And besides if the epistle of Clement of Rome still belongs to the first century and the epistles of Ignatius to the second or third decade of the second century, and if we cannot assign a later date to the Gospel of St John than the first decade of the second century, then our writings must have come into existence at an earlier date; for they all represent, perhaps with the exception of the First Epistle to Timothy, earlier stages of ideas and tendencies which in the writings we have just mentioned have attained to further development. Indeed, the author of the epistle of Clement must have read the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus the Epistle to the Hebrews and the First Epistle of St Peter, according to which the persecutions are still in full course, introduce us to the first half of the last decade of the first century, while the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Acts, which show traces of recent suffering though the actual persecution is past, may be placed in the

second half of the same decade. The history of universal literature shows, by many similar examples, that literary production like the tides has its periods of ebb and flow. For a period of about thirty years after the death of St Peter and St Paul Christians were still satisfied with what these Apostles had left them; but when the new period, which begins with the first conflicts between Christianity and the Roman State, brought Christians face to face with a situation in which all former interests and standpoints were disturbed and confused, then in the struggle for new and clear expression they again took up the pen.

And finally, these writings of the time of Domitian are related together in regard to place of origin. Two of them, Hebrews and 1 Peter, with the greatest probability proceed from Rome; two others, Ephesians and Acts, from Ephesus, one of the places to which 1 Peter was addressed. The Pastoral Epistles leave the choice free between both these cities.

For all these reasons we are justified in dealing with these writings in close connection with one another. And though each one of them may be too meagre and indefinite in content to afford us a distinct and complete conception of its circumstances, yet if we use them to complete and illustrate one another there grows before our eyes, as the result of the spiritual and mental labour of the second generation, an interesting picture of the surging forces and interests of Christendom at the end of the first century.

### 1. The Acts of the Apostles.

The need of a generation, which could not but demand that the great past should be kept before its eyes as the law of the present, was met by a work which is the longest and, in the narrower sense of the word, the only historical writing in the New Testament. Already in early days it was called the Acts of the Apostles. So complete

was the success of the work in meeting the need of its times that not only is it the only writing of the kind in the New Testament, but it was only at a remarkably later date that its author found imitators, and then only among sects which claimed Apostles as their champions. Measured also by the standard of these later productions this work is really unique in character.

It is now generally recognised that the Acts has the same author as the Gospel of St Luke. The insignificant differences in vocabulary and style are at once explained by the difference in the material and the sources. It is likewise certain that the preface (St Luke i. 1–4) was meant to be an introduction to the whole work, and therefore also to the Acts, its second part. For the description of authorities given therein refers unmistakably to both parts of the work; the "eye-witnesses" are the authority for the Life of our Lord, and the "ministers of the word" for the history of the founding of the Christian communities. We may therefore

use the notices given in this preface concerning the aim of the author as a key to the comprehension of his literary procedure in the Acts. We learn that this description of "the things which had been fulfilled among Christians" rests upon a careful collection of material, and is intended to place the cultivated man of those days in a position to judge of the trustworthiness of that concerning which he allows himself to be instructed. As we see from the dedication to the "excellent" Theophilus, the author has in his eye readers belonging to the class of higher State officials, ignorant of and yet well disposed towards the Christian movement, who feel moved to inquire thoroughly into the origin and aims of this new phenomenon. The first part of the work which deals with the Founder of the new community naturally could not be essentially modified by this aim of the author, but it is otherwise with the second part. This was intended to give clear information concerning the introduction of the new religion

into the Gentile world, concerning the origin of the community of believers spreading into many lands, and concerning the relation of both to the Jewish religion and the Roman State. It therefore treats of events of a more outward nature; hence the Acts of the Apostles is more wanting in interest for inward purely religious feeling than almost any other primitive Christian writing.

Nor does the author afford us very satisfactory insight into the inward history of the life of the Christian community, into the development of Christian thought and conduct, though in the very first chapters he is careful to draw for us in his description of the primitive Church of Jerusalem an ideal picture of a Christian Church, and though he occasionally gives us an outline of the convictions which inspired these communities, in the form of solemn utterances of leading Christians. But compared with the testimony of the Apostle St Paul, or even with that of the epistles of the second generation, what is here

offered to us is truly meagre and colourless. The description of the Church of Jerusalem, although the author twice undertakes it (ii. 42–47 and iv. 32–v. 16), proves that he lacks all accurate and detailed information. General edifying phrases cannot take the place of concrete facts. Compared with the living portraits of the Pauline churches, which are dashed off in the epistles of the great Apostle, this primitive Church of Jerusalem suggests a sacred picture of a somewhat conventional type. It is no doubt the author's own ideal of a Christian Church which he thus transplants into those early days—a church where all are good, pious, obedient to the Apostles, where no "spiritual gifts" disturb unity and order. The very fact that the author seeks in the past the standard for all the future, and so places his ideal in the past instead of self-confidently contending for it in his own present, testifies to the lack of original creative force which is characteristic of this second generation of

Christians. Again, when he comes to the description of the religious treasure of Christendom we no longer discern anything of the wealth of feeling, of the force of purpose, of the abounding riches of thought which are shown us even in the post-Pauline epistles, though indeed in failing measure. To be a Christian means to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, in His and in the general Resurrection, and in the approaching Judgment—and to live a holy life. This measured by the standard of St Paul or of our Lord is a very curtailed gospel. But it is not therefore without interest; for it gives us original information concerning the view taken of the essential nature of Christianity by a convert from heathenism at the end of the first century, by one who, though he was no theologian, was yet a man of culture.

But the main import of the book, according to the author's purpose, does not lie in these occasional notices which often lead up to a formulated though truly meagre confession of

belief. Rather he has set himself the task of showing how Christianity has spread itself over the world. It is to be noted as an especially characteristic trait that he closes his account with the life's work of St Paul. And this limitation of the scope of his narrative to the missionary work of the first generation is not at all due to the fact that he did not survive that epoch—here and there, indeed, we can clearly see that a considerable period of time separates him from the events he narrates—but he considers that the great work of introducing Christianity into the world was fulfilled by the first generation. And he indeed judges rightly. He feels, and his feeling is correct, that what had happened since those days was nothing new but only the natural continuation of a development then set going, and that this first generation alone possessed heroes—creative leading spirits whose performances and experiences were worthy of narration.

He divides his work into four sections,

though as a skilful author he, according to the taste of his times, supplies transitional passages at the points of division so that one notices no marked gaps in his narrative. First he tells of the beginning of Christianity in Jerusalem and among the Jewish people (i. 1–viii. 4); next of its extension among the Gentiles and beyond the borders of Palestine (viii. 5–xvi. 5); thirdly, of the foundation of Christian communities in the Greek world (xvi. 6–xxi. 14); and fourthly, of the legal position of Christianity in the Roman State (xxi. 15–xxviii. 31). His work very clearly confirms what is expressly stated in the preface that his aims are practical, not historical; indeed, a literary undertaking of purely historical interest was a psychological impossibility among men whose eyes were so earnestly fixed upon the future. This lack of purely historical interest can alone explain how it is that a writer, who everywhere shows himself master of his material and a skilled artist, nevertheless throughout his whole book gives us only unfinished

sketches. A few examples will suffice. The completion of the number of the Twelve (i. 15–26) and the choice of the Seven (vi. 1–6) is related in detail, and yet we hear nothing of the performances of these two bodies. St John, the son of Zebedee, who appears on a few occasions in the first sections as a silent companion of St Peter, afterwards completely vanishes from the scene. But it is the same with men of whose work something is told, such as Barnabas, Silas, Apollos, Mark; indeed, even St Peter, who at the beginning stands as the central point of the narrative, is afterwards completely forgotten. On the other hand St James, who takes St Peter's place at Jerusalem, appears upon the scene without introduction (xii. 17) and acts (xv. 13, xxi. 18) as the leader of the community; and yet we hear nothing else of him—nothing concerning his conversion, nor how he came to his position in the Church, nor concerning his end. Also the story of the origin of the body of elders in Jerusalem, who are mentioned in xi. 30,

xv. 2 *ff.*, xxi. 18, is nowhere related; indeed, the whole history of this earliest Christian Church whose beginnings fill the first seven chapters, practically ceases from that point so far as this book is concerned. And the author has no space for much else which appears well worthy of knowledge, at least to us of to-day who desire to see clear pictures of the past. Thus nothing is written concerning the position of the Twelve in the early Church of Jerusalem, or concerning the relations of the latter with Temple, Synagogue, and national Jewish society. We learn just as little of the organisation, character, and inward history of the Pauline communities. Though the author may not have been in the position to fill up many of these gaps, he probably scarcely noticed them. Concerning other things, whose omission we notice, he must have known more than he tells us.

Moreover, the frequent cases of obscurity of description may be partly due to want of power in the narrator, though this does not

well tally with the impression of the author which we receive from his gospel. The chief cause at all events is to be found in the fact that clearness of historical description was no object to him nor did it form part of his purpose. For example, we cannot realise for ourselves the event of Pentecost as he describes it—the author is not clear even as to the locality—while the miracle of tongues, with the immediate conversion and even Baptism of three thousand souls (ii. 41), is an impossibility. The representation given of the community of goods (ii. 44; iv. 32; iv. 34–v. 11) is quite obscure. The behaviour of the people of Jerusalem as well as that of their rulers is often self-contradictory, and its constant change is left unexplained. While the Pharisees are described as favourably disposed to the Christians, the bitterest persecutor of the new community arises from their midst. Stephen and Philip are chosen among the Seven to serve tables; instead of this, they become greater missionaries than the Twelve.

The trial of Stephen is most involved. In spite of the general flight of the Christians from Jerusalem (viii. 1) St Paul finds a great number of them there (ix. 25). In spite of the persecution raging everywhere (viii. 1–3) the Apostles journey preaching through Samaria and return to Jerusalem (viii. 14–17, 25). St Philip in Cæsarea (viii. 40) and St Peter in the same place (x. 1) take no notice of one another. The detailed narrative of St Peter's deliverance from prison stands in unintelligible contrast to the deep silence concerning the further action of one so miraculously delivered (xii. 1–17). How he came to be at the Council of Jerusalem is no more explained than how St James came to be chief in the Church of that city. The conversion of St Paul is thrice narrated (chaps. ix., xxii., xxvi.) with striking differences which seem to give no trouble to the author. All these things and much besides are only intelligible on the supposition that the author is moved by no kind of historical interest in the scenes which he describes.

Moreover, the plan of the book shows that the author does not intend simply to narrate the course of history. The descriptions in the first part (chaps. i.–viii.) after the three introductory stories—The missionary commission of the ascending Christ (i. 1–14), The completion of the number of the Twelve (i. 15–26), The origin of the Church (ii. 1–41)—are fashioned in three stages of exactly similar construction. To three notices concerning the life of the community (ii. 42–47, iv. 32–v. 14, vi. 1–7) are respectively attached narratives of the ministry and miracles of St Peter and St John (iii. 1–26), of the Twelve (v. 15–16), and of one of the Seven (vi. 8–10). In each case this leads to an intervention of the authorities, to formal charges, speeches of defence and judicial sentences (iv. 1–22, v. 17–42, vi. 11–viii. 3). We note a distinct climax in the three stages, most clearly marked in the final event of each; in the first the authorities only give a warning, in the second the Apostles are scourged, and in the third St

Stephen is stoned. This is not history but artificial literary construction. The accounts of the conversion of Saul (chap. ix.) and of Cornelius (chap. x.) are parallel to one another even in detail; so are the missions of Philip (chap. viii.) and of Saul (chap. ix.) with their stages — an independent mission in new countries, recognition by the Church of Jerusalem, the settlement of the missionary in the one case in Cæsarea, in the other case in Tarsus. The same is true of the missions of Philip (chap. viii.) and of Peter (ix. 31–xi. 18): first miracles, then the intervention of angels, then the Holy Spirit, then the justification of Baptism, where the agreement is almost verbal. If, moreover, we find similar parallels in the active ministry of St Peter and St Paul, this does not show, as was once supposed, that the Acts was intended to set up a compromise between the two contending authorities of primitive Christendom, St Peter and St Paul; rather it only answers to the literary disposition of the writer. The number

three plays its part also in his history of St Paul: there are three records of the conversion (chaps. ix., xxii., xxvi.), three missionary journeys (chaps. xiii. *f.*, xv. 36–xviii. 22, xviii. 23–xix. 40), three great missionary sermons—one to Jews (chap. xiii.), one to Gentiles (chap. xvii.), one to Christians (chap. xx.)—three great apologetic speeches (chaps. xx., xxiv., xxvi.). This shows again that the author cannot have aimed at giving a connected history of what occurred among the first generation of Christians. It is indeed a matter for unfeigned sorrow that the naïve reception of this book as an historical work instead of helping the reader to form a living conception of the events of those days, has rather blinded his eye for and blunted his interest in the great historical problems which lie in the beginnings of Christianity. If there has not yet arisen among us a consistent historical picture of the beginnings of Christianity — a picture which by showing clearly the active forces and the decisive

moments of developments would claim the interest of every cultivated man—one of the most important causes of this failure lies in the idiosyncrasy of the document to which we are referred as the chief authority on these points. The Pauline epistles tell us much more concerning these things, and they also place the characteristic forces of primitive Christian development in their right light.

What then was the author's aim in writing this book? He cannot have meant thereby to establish a compromise between different conceptions of Christianity. With the greatest simplicity he permits all the characters of his story, sometimes even in close succession, to bring absolutely the same somewhat superficial Christian beliefs to expression. The question—What is the right conception of Christianity?—has absolutely no interest for him. The opposition of St Paul to Jewish Christianity is neither concealed nor minimised. His parallelism with St Peter is less than that with St Stephen or St Philip. It was formerly

supposed that this book disclosed a tendency to unite the Jewish Christianity of Palestine and the Gentile Christianity of the Pauline churches upon one central platform. If the author had this end in view he has shown little tact in dealing with sore feelings; for on the one hand, in ii. 26 and iii. 25 *f.*, he unreservedly acknowledges the religious preeminence of Judaism, while on the other hand he strongly condemns the Jews as a "crooked generation" (ii. 40) and renews the ancient curse of Isaiah against that nation (xxviii. 26 *f.*). The whole supposition is, however, improbable in the highest degree, for no early Christian document contemporary with this work gives us the least hint that the composing of controversies or the harmonising of discords between Jewish and Gentile Christians, or the settlement of the question of the validity of the Mosaic Law, were in any sense crying needs of those times.

All that is necessary in order to discover the purpose of this work is to dwell upon what

evidently interests the author instead of taking what interests men of to-day as the starting-point of our enquiry. The sketch of the construction of the book given above showed that the narratives of the three parallel cycles of the first part culminate in records of public accusations against the Christians, of defences before the authorities, and judicial sentences. It is only in these sections that the narrative becomes detailed. All the speeches in chaps. iii., v., and vii. are apologies for the Christian religious brotherhood and its missionary activity. The last of the speeches is also intended to explain why Judaism was incapable of comprehending the new movement. In the second part of the book there is a change in the point of interest of the narrative. It is shown by examples, again with increasing emphasis, how the extension of the Gospel beyond the limits of a hostile Judaism was divinely willed and directed. The dispersion of the Christians at the death of Stephen is the primary cause (viii. 4 *f.*). By the word of

an angel Philip, after brilliant success among the kindred Samaritans, is conducted to an Æthiopian (viii. 26 *f.*). Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles (ix. 14, xxii. 21, xxvi. 16–18), by means of a heavenly vision, from being a persecutor becomes a champion and missionary of Christianity (ix. 1 *ff.*). Making his escape from the Jews of Damascus (ix. 23 *f.*) he preaches in Jerusalem to the Hellenists (ix. 29). Peter again, by means of vision and angelic direction, is led against his inclination to the Roman centurion in Cæsarea (x. 1–48). A Christian community, the work of unknown men, arises as it were spontaneously in Antioch, the capital of the East (xi. 19–21). By prophets Paul and Barnabas are ordained in Antioch and sent forth thence to Cyprus and Galatia (xiii. 1 *ff.*), and the brilliant success of their mission among the Gentiles after its complete failure among the Jews (xiii. 46) is the justification of their undertaking. In the third part of the book, which describes the Pauline mission in the Greek

world—this time in chronological order—the interest of the narrator is really held, as in the first part, by the attitude of the civil authorities towards the charges brought against the Christians; so in Philippi (xvi. 20–40), in Thessalonica (xvii. 6–9), in Corinth (xviii. 12–17), in Ephesus (xix. 23–40). Strong emphasis is laid upon the fact that the Christians are always found innocent of the charges brought against them. The fourth and last part of the book is almost entirely taken up by St Paul's apologies for Christianity and for its extension among the Gentiles (xxii. 1–21, xxiv. 10–21, xxvi. 2–23), with interludes testifying to the fanatical enmity of the Jews (xxi. 11, 13, 21, 27, 31, 35; xxii. 22–24; xxiii. 2, 10–22; xxiv. 1–9; xxv. 1–9; xxviii. 17–24). In every case the charge, the defence, or the verdict is distinctly formulated, as already in the third part (xvi. 20 *f.*, xvii. 7, xviii. 13–15, xix. 35–37), so also here (xxi. 20 *f.*, 28, 38; xxiii. 6, 9, 28 *f.*; xxiv. 5–8, 25; xxv. 8, 11, 18 *f.*, 25; xxvi. 32; xxviii. 17–22). All

these things clearly show that this book was written in order to prove from history that the extension of the new religion among the Gentiles was in accordance with God's will and was absolutely without danger to the State, for never had a charge brought against its champions led to a condemnation that was legally tenable. From this point of view, it now also becomes intelligible why the author does not relate the result of the trial of St Paul and prefers rather to close his book with the description of the freedom accorded to the Apostle in Rome though he was there a prisoner upon trial (xxviii. 30 *f.*). It is scarcely conceivable that the end of the book should have been lost; and it is pure fancy to suppose that the death of the author prevented the completion of his work, or that he intended to continue the story of the Acts in a third book which he was hindered from writing. Rather the last words "none forbidding him" admirably suit his purpose and aim; while these would have been spoiled by the Apostle's

condemnation to death had the narrative been continued.

But the writer in all that he narrates is not absorbed in this one interest. There is a second point which he wishes to elucidate from history—namely, the relation of the Christian religion to Judaism. He contends for the position that Christianity does not stand in opposition to the Jewish religion but is its fulfilment. The speeches of St Peter (ii. 14–36–iii. 12–26) are dedicated to the proof that Christianity is the fulfilment promised in the sacred Scriptures of the Jews; those of St Stephen (vii. 2–53) and of St Paul (xiii. 16–41) are intended to show that the present attitude of the Jews corresponds to their whole past history; while all through the book we can see that it is one of the author's chief objects to refute the fallacy that Gentile Christianity is opposed to the Jewish religion. Thus it is a constant trait of the narrative that the new Christian foundations always have their origin in the Synagogue and set

themselves in communion with the Church of Jerusalem; indeed, that by their offerings of alms (xi. 29 *f.*, xxiv. 17) they even place themselves in a relation to this Church corresponding to that of the proselyte to the born Jew. Only the historic and characteristic obstinacy and stiffneckedness of the Jews had now brought them to the pass of rejecting the Gospel. On an important occasion (xv. 14–18) it is shown by St James, the champion of the Jewish Christians, that this accession of the Gentiles had been already prophesied, and especially in the second section of the work it is pointed out that the details of their conversion were divinely directed. The possibility of brotherly converse between Jew and Gentile Christian is shown in the story of Cornelius (x. 43–45, xi. 18), and by the transactions and decrees of the Council of the Apostles (xv. 19–29) which were generally accepted and carried out (xvi. 4, xxi. 25). Perhaps such great emphasis is laid upon Baptism because it was recognised

as the act by which Gentiles were received into religious fellowship with Jews. But it is principally in the fourth section of the book that this question of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity plays the leading part. As already in Corinth by the mouth of Gallio so also in the judicial pleadings of this section it is repeatedly and emphatically stated that the Christian Gospel is a matter of Jewish controversy (xxiii. 29, xxv. 18 *f.*, xxvi. 3). St Paul again and again protests that he himself is a Jew (xxi. 39, xxii. 3, xxvi. 5), that he serves the God of his fathers (xxiii. 1, xxiv. 14–16, xxv. 8), that he believes in the Holy Scriptures of the Jews (xxvi. 22, 27; xxviii. 23), that he wishes to turn none away from this faith (xxi. 21, xxiv. 12, xxv. 10, xxviii. 17), that he preaches none other than the Hope of the Jews (xxiii. 6; xxvi. 6–8, 22, 27; xxviii. 20, 23); while like Stephen before him (vi. 13) he is distinctly accused of teaching apostasy from Moses (xxi. 21, 28). While the author establishes his thesis that the controversy is a purely

Jewish question, he upon each occasion lets it be clearly seen that St Paul had committed no crime worthy of death (xxiii. 29; xxv. 11, 18, 25).

We may, therefore, following the intention of the author, class the four parts of his work under the following headings:—(1) Chaps. i.–viii.: The relation of Christianity to Judaism whose fulfilment it is; (2) Chaps. ix.–xv.: The position of the Gentiles within the Church; (3) Chaps. xvi.–xxii.: The attitude of Jews and Gentiles, more particularly the civil authorities, towards Christianity; (4) Chaps. xxii.–xxviii.: The right conclusion as to the relationship of Christianity to Judaism and the State.

This method of construction shows that the book is not an historical work but an apology for Christianity set forth in historical pictures. In it every conceivable charge against Christianity is proved to be unjustified, and a claim is asserted to the same protection and the same freedom which were assured to the Jewish religion in the Roman State, seeing that

it is shown that Christianity is nothing else than the fulfilment of the Jewish religion rightly understood. It lies in the nature of the case that these themes could not be each exclusively assigned to one of the four parts of the work; and considering the multitude of interests that occupied the attention of the Christian brotherhood it is only what might be expected if all kinds of side-issues come in for discussion. Nor could it well be avoided that this book, with its constant reference to the external relations of the Christian movement, should be wanting in its representation of the inward heart of Christianity, in spite of the attractive and sometimes very noble descriptions of particular characters and events that are here given us. The points of view which determine the form and substance of the book point to a time when the State was already seriously occupied with the new society, and when the eyes of the Christians themselves were already earnestly fixed upon the world that surrounded them. Thus this

work carries us back to the beginning of that great conflict which lasted in varied form for some fifteen hundred years between the State and the new power which had now come into existence—a religion divorced in spirit from every form of State authority and fashioning for itself its own organisation. It is this which marks the importance of the book in the history of mankind. In Rom. xiii. 1–7 we have the first testimony that the struggle was commencing. It had become intensified by the time Pet. ii. 13–17 was written, while in 1 Tim. ii. 2 return is again made to the tone of Rom. xiii., after the Acts had, as it were, prepared the way for a mutual understanding. The task which our author had set himself clearly shows that he wrote after the Persecution of Domitian—the first serious and determined conflict of the new society with the Roman State. On the other hand the perfect simplicity of the Christian communities as pictured in this book, the absence of all purely Greek conceptions, and the lively

interest that is shown in the historical figure of St Paul, forbid us to assign the work to a much later date. We may then assume that it was written at the end of the first century.

We have thus shown that this book is an historical document of the first importance for our knowledge of the conditions and ideas of the time at which it was written; this, however, does not determine the question of its value as an historical authority for the times which it describes for its own purposes. In our examination of this question we must distinguish the narratives relating to the time of St Paul from all that precede that date. In the narrative of the missionary journeys of St Paul the pronoun "we" of the narrator appears, as it seems quite capriciously, in four sections separate from one another and yet closely bound up with their immediate context (xvi. 10–18, xx. 5–15, xxi. 1–18, xxvii. 1–xxviii. 16). We cannot suppose that our skilful author, if he derived these passages from the account of an eye-witness, would not have changed the

first person into the third according to the tenor of the rest of his narrative. We can only understand his procedure on the supposition that this variation in person already existed in a comprehensive document which our author wished to incorporate wholly and in its original form into his own work. This document may be clearly discerned in many other parts of the work. In the account of the Pauline missions, which are often given very fully, our attention is caught by passages merely consisting of cursory sketches of the Apostle's travels, sketches which contain little more than a list of the cities he visited. We come upon such passages, for instance, in xvi. 6–12 ; xvii. 1 ; xix. 21–23 ; xx. 1–6, 13–16 ; xxi. 1–4, 7, whilst within the framework thus formed are inserted life-like descriptions of particular events which occurred at the most important places. The contrast of style also is most noticeable ; here prosaic, purely objective, after the fashion of a chronicle, there full of edifying phraseology and legend after the fashion of a romance. This difference

is even accompanied by a difference in vocabulary. Phrases which occur again and again in the more diffuse sections and partly also in the gospel, and hence seem to belong to the style of the author, are wanting in the other sections; whilst in the record of travels, though it is content with expressions of the simplest description—such as "he came," "he passed through"—we find not a few words which occur nowhere else in the Acts. This continuous diary of the missionary journeys can only have been composed by a travelling companion of St Paul, for its uncommonly complicated notices may without difficulty be reconciled with those derived from the Pauline epistles. The memory of those intricate routes could scarcely have been preserved by oral tradition, and the uselessness of these records for the purpose of our author supports the assumption that it was only reverence for an unique document dating from the time of St Paul that caused him to incorporate them in his work. With more or less certainty in detail we may still disentangle

this original document from the accretions of oral tradition. It first appears probably at xi. 19, certainly at xiii. 1, and continues until the arrival in Rome (xxviii. 16). As an example of the result of our analysis and of the character of this document we here give word for word its commencement—found in xi. 18–26; xiii. 1, 4–6, 13 *f.*, 51; xiv. 1, 6 *f.*, 21, 24–28; xv. 36–41:—

"The Christians that were scattered abroad travelled as far as Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. But there were some of them men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who when they were come to Antioch spake unto the Greeks also. Then was Barnabas also sent from Jerusalem to Antioch, and he went forth to Tarsus to fetch Saul and he brought him to Antioch. In this place the disciples were first called Christians. Now there were in the church that was there prophets and teachers—Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of

Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.' And so being sent forth by the Holy Ghost they went down to Seleucia and from thence sailed to Cyprus; and they had John as their attendant. And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia and went on to Iconium and to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe, and the region round about. And when they had made many disciples they returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch. And they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia; and when they had preached the word in Perga they went down to Attalia and thence sailed to Antioch; and they tarried no little time in Antioch. But after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, 'Let us return now and visit the brethren and see how

they fare.' And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also who was called Mark. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work. And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder from one another; and Barnabas took Mark and sailed away unto Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas, and went through Syria and Cilicia and came to Derbe and Lystra."

The question whether all these notices really stood in the hypothetical document must remain undiscussed. In the following parts of the book it is possible to arrive at a more certain conclusion. We may fairly assign to this source most of what is contained in xvi. 1–3, 6–18; xvii. 1–15 (in part), 34; xviii. 1–3, 5, 7–11, 18–19*a*, 21*b*–23; xix. 1, 8–10*a*, 21 *f.*; xx. 1–16; xxi. 1–18; xxvii. 1–xxviii. 16.

This record of St Paul's missionary journeys, which has been preserved to us because it has been incorporated in the Acts of the Apostles, is concerned only with places, with the

travellers, and with chronological dates. Its style is dry and monotonous, and its vocabulary is meagre. We might even conjecture that one who occasionally accompanied St Paul in his travels made this compilation in order that it might be produced as evidence at the Apostle's trial. But this supposition is unnecessary, and, moreover, would not account for passages such as xvi. 16–18, xx. 7–12, and indeed the whole description of the voyage to Rome in xxvii. *f.* We know that it was customary with distinguished travellers, princes, and generals of the ancient Hellenic world to have short diaries kept by some companion as a support for the memory wherein the stations of the route and, perhaps, here and there notable experiences were cursorily set down. For instance, according to the opinion of Herman Diels, the Anabasis of Xenophon is founded upon a diary of this description, which Xenophon himself developed into an historical work, inserting therein all kinds of narratives and speeches.

While therefore this diary forms an historical authority of the highest rank for the time of St Paul—one that is indeed equal in value to his own epistles—the trustworthiness of the traditions proceeding from different churches, which the author of the Acts has interwoven with his source, cannot be so surely established. Legend has played its part in their adornment; and it is indeed difficult, often impossible, to trace the historical fact which underlies the transformation it has experienced in course of tradition, more especially as this tradition has seriously modified and even omitted essential points. When similar events repeat themselves in the narrative, and this is a phenomenon of remarkably frequent occurrence, the doubt arises whether such repetition accords with reality. The speeches which are placed in the mouth of St Paul are, of course, as with all writers of antiquity, the composition of the author himself. This conclusion is suggested by the fact, which we have already

noticed, that there are three of these speeches—one to the Jews (chap. xiii.), one to the Greeks (chap. xvii.), and one to the Christians (chap. xx.)—and is confirmed by the fact that they have no relationship in form or content with the epistles of St Paul, but rather represent him speaking essentially the same thoughts, in the same language, and indeed in the same rhetorical form as St Peter and St Stephen in the first part of the Acts.

The records concerning the beginnings of Christianity in Palestine (i. 1–xi. 18, xi. 27–xii. 25) as well as the account of the Apostolic Council (xv. 1–35) have been thoroughly examined with a view to the discovery of written sources, but with no success. The construction of the first part (chaps. i.–viii.), which we have already described, absolutely excludes the hypothesis that here an original document has been worked over, though it does not prevent our assuming that the author has made use of various traditions. But also in viii. 1–40, ix. 1–30, ix. 31–xi. 18, xii. 4–24,

the substance, and above all the form of the narrative, only permit us to trace it back to traditions which gathered round three great personalities and were passed from mouth to mouth until they were first written down by the author of the Acts. Here, no doubt, historical reminiscences lie in the background, but it is scarcely possible to determine to what extent they have been embellished by legend; nor is it possible to decide whether the author himself or oral tradition before him is responsible for the fact that the same occurrences seem often to be employed as the basis of different tales. It is not without interest to notice how much deeper in thought and more poetic in feeling, how much grander in plan, richer in motive, and varied in scenery are the legends of the Gospel which cling to the person of our Lord than all the traditions of the Acts connected with leading personalities of the first generation of Christians, while many of the latter traditions are dependent upon stories in the Gospel. And yet in spite

of all reservations, and with proper caution in trusting to details, these traditions do give us enough information upon the most important questions of the external history of the first beginnings of Christianity to enable us to understand these beginnings in their proper connection. Without the Acts, all the events which led to the origin of the Christian Church would lie for us in impenetrable darkness so far as they are not illuminated by St Paul. This work has accordingly a value, which nothing can replace, as an authority for the times it deals with. Indeed, considering the importance of Christianity in the history of the world, and the necessity that its beginnings must be known before we can fully understand its real character, our book is an authority of the very first rank, concerning which the whole world would be speaking, had it only been discovered for the first time in these days.

As in the Gospel so also in this second part of his work the author proves himself to be a

skilful writer, an industrious compiler, a sure master of the varied material he has collected, a clever narrator with feeling for tone and colour (*cf.* xvi. 25–40, xix. 23–40, xx. 36–38, xxi. 10–14, xxv. 23–xxvi. 1). He is also a man of grand ideals in the treatment of history and of exact reverence for the authorities that lay before him. The two books, the Gospel and the Acts, may have taken the name of Luke from the author of part of the second work, just in the same way as the two other gospels have taken the name of St Mark and St Matthew. St Luke, the occasional companion of St Paul (Col. iv. 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11), may well have been the author of the travel-diary which has been worked up in the Acts of the Apostles.

## 2. The Epistle to the Hebrews.

This book of the New Testament, which, as far backwards as we can trace it, has always been called the Epistle to the Hebrews, is a

document of the highest importance in the history of Christian thought. It marks the definite entrance of Alexandrianism into the sphere of Christianity. By Alexandrianism we mean that strange amalgamation of Jewish religion and Greek philosophy which was gradually brought about chiefly in Alexandria during the last century before Christ, and at the time of St Paul was consummated in the teaching of the famous Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria. Even St Paul betrays his sympathy with this peculiar school of thought, but he does not stand under its dominating influence: he only adopts certain of its ideas and works them into his own theological scheme which had taken form in the schools of Tarsus and Jerusalem. Our author, however, has evidently grown up in the atmosphere of this Alexandrian school; at least he lives in it and is conversant with all its artifices. We may say with a fair amount of certainty that he has read writings of Philo; at all events he uses many terms

and expressions that were employed by that philosopher, some of which were indeed first coined by him. By this introduction of Alexandrianism into the sphere of Christian thought there was placed in the hands of the Christians a scientific method which, in contrast to the Rabbinic method of St Paul, was in close relationship with the Greek mind and afforded it the necessary means of understanding Christianity or of accommodating Christianity to itself. We may therefore at once conclude that the author of our book was a man educated in the culture of those days. This is also shown by his masterly handling of the Greek literary language of his time: he has command of a multitude of expressions that were alien to everyday life, and of all the delicate shades of meaning of which this rich language was capable. Above all, he shows by his arrangement that he is master of the rhetoric of his times. The Epistle to the Hebrews, in far greater measure than the Pauline epistles, is constructed according to

the rules of the Schools. He also sacrifices to the taste of the times in the circumstantiality and undeniable prolixity of his work, which hinder the view of the whole and stand in sharp contrast to St Paul's method of going at once to the heart of the matter and remaining in close touch with it.

The most distinct line of division in this book occurs after x. 31, where the significant concluding phrase is combined with a distinct change of tone in verse 32. In place of "we," which has up to this time prevailed (ii. 1–3; iv. 1–11, 14–16; vi. 19 *f.*; x. 22 *ff.*), "ye" now appears (x. 32–36, xii. 3–17, xiii. 1–19). Before this the pronoun of the second person has only occurred in the section vi. 9–12, for the address in the second person in iii. 1, vii. 4, iii. 12 *f.*, v. 11 *f.* is due only to the immediate context. Also the thought of sacrifice and of the high-priesthood which dominates the first part of the epistle now falls completely into the background, though it also appears incidentally in xii. 24; xiii.

11 *f.*, 20. The nucleus of the first chief division of the epistle, extending to x. 31, is without doubt found in the section vii. 1–x. 18, which might well receive the superscription:—Jesus the true High Priest. This theme is set in the framework of a declaration that this Jesus has entered as High Priest into the Heavenly Sanctuary (vi. 19 *f.*, x. 19–21), and is no doubt treated at such length because of the supreme import of this belief in the mind of the writer; for the passionate energy and surpassing emphasis of the following warning (x. 22–31) to hold fast the confession of the hope founded upon this fact shows that the thought of the writer here reaches the desired climax. But the theme of vi. 19 *f.* and x. 19–21 has already appeared in v. 10, and what lies between v. 10 and vi. 19 *f.* is only intended to awaken interest in its importance—quite in accordance with the method of contemporary rhetoric. This same theme, however, appears still earlier at iv. 14, also combined with a very concise summary of the warning of x. 22–31—

"let us hold fast our confession." Again, what lies between iv. 14 and v. 10 only aims, in a more general way than that of vii. 1–x. 18, at bringing into clear view the importance of the theme that Christians have a high-priest in Jesus. From this it becomes clear that iv. 14–x. 31 is a single closely-connected whole, and that the real object of all the argument in this part of the letter is to confirm from all sides the warning indicated in iv. 14 and developed in x. 19–31. First the theme is given, followed by its detailed presentation and proof, in iv. 15–v. 9; then interest in the theme is awakened (v. 10–vi. 20); and finally we have a discussion of its significance (vii. 1–x. 18) from the side of the Personality of the High Priest (vii. 1–28) and from the side of His ministry (viii. 1–x. 18). Accordingly, all that comes before iv. 14 must be of the nature of an introduction—as, indeed, we may clearly recognise for ourselves. The discourse begins with an appreciation, expressed in the highest conceivable terms, of the unique nature of this

High Priest (i. 1–3), illustrated by a comparison of His rank with that of the angels (i. 1–14)—a train of thought which possesses an analogy in the Epistle to the Colossians. The object of this discussion is shown in the application (ii. 1–4), connecting closely with i. 1–3, that because of the unique superiority of this sublime Being far above all angels it is necessary not to neglect the salvation brought about by Him. Then, after it has been shown that this supreme Personality, whose human name is now first given (ii. 9), has wrought this Salvation by means of His deepest humiliation in the suffering of death (ii. 5–18), the warning of ii. 1–4 is yet again administered in a more detailed and impressive fashion by the employment of edifying narratives from the Old Testament (iii. 1–iv. 13). Here in iii. 6 we already have a foretaste of the warning of iv. 14 and x. 19–31. To this faultlessly constructed introduction now corresponds the second chief division of the epistle beginning with x. 32. Here for the first time the situa-

tion of the readers is clearly described, and it is in the first place shown that they can only fulfil the demand, with which the first part of the epistle culminates, through patience based upon trustful faith (x. 32–39). After a long list of types of this faith, which endures in the midst of suffering, has been collected from the Old Testament (xi. 1–40), the warning of x. 35–39, which has been thus fortified, is now emphatically repeated in xii. 1–3. Then a sympathetic appreciation of the sufferings of the Christians (xii. 4–11), already depicted in x. 32–34, which is closely connected with a quotation from the Old Testament and is addressed to the hearts of the readers, again leads up to the same warning now developed with most striking imagery (xii. 12–17); and finally, the eternal destruction which threatens apostacy is contrasted in a brilliant piece of rhetoric with the glorious calling and still more glorious future of the faithful (xii. 18–29). It is evident that the real object of the epistle has now been attained. As with St Paul,

there still follow a number of separate exhortations that fall outside the main scope of the argument and refer to particular conditions of the communities (xiii. 1–19). Then the discourse closes with a solemn blessing, again reminding us of the manner of St Paul (xiii. 20*f.*).

Then as an epilogue there follow a few verses of a purely personal character. The brethren are besought to take to heart this short epistle of exhortation (xiii. 22). They are informed that Timotheus is set at liberty. The writer hopes with him shortly to visit his readers (xiii. 23). Then come greetings to the readers and their leaders, and greetings from those of Italy (24*f.*). The epistle, like the Pauline epistles, now closes with a short sentence of blessing.

If we omit the last chapter, our analysis of the construction of the epistle shows that it bears the character of a written discourse rather than of a real letter. It has a practical aim, the confirming of the hearers in holding

fast to Christianity. It is addressed to all without exception; the author never turns to a part only of his audience, nor does he speak of schism or faction among them. It can moreover be plainly seen why this exhortation is needed. The readers are suffering persecution (x. 32–34, xii. 1–4, xiii. 1–7). Some of them are in prison and evil entreated, and they are exhorted to remember them (xiii. 3); some of their leaders had even become martyrs (xiii. 7). They were as it were in a state of chastisement wherein comfort was alone to be found in the certainty that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (xii. 4–11); indeed, in their suffering they were in fellowship with Jesus Himself (xii. 2). This hard case of theirs involved them in temptations again similar to those which assaulted Jesus in His trials (ii. 18, iv. 15). Where men are compassed with infirmity (iv. 15) there is danger of slackness (xii. 3, 12*f.*; vi. 11*f.*). The readers have need that their heart be established (xiii. 9), that God perfect them in every good

work (xiii. 21), that they hold fast the beginning of their confidence even to the end (iii. 14), so that they may not fall away from the living God (iii. 12), may not sin wilfully (x. 26), may not be defiled as Esau (xii. 15 *f.*), or become like unto the idolatrous generation in the wilderness (iii. 7 *ff.*). Therefore they must beware lest any root of bitterness spring up among them (xii. 15), lest any evil heart of unbelief, any disobedience (iii. 12, 18; iv. 11), harden them through the deceitfulness of sin (iii. 13); they must lay aside all ambition and the sin which so easily besets them and must persevere in the conflict appointed them (xii. 1); they must, as is again and again repeated in varied form, hold fast their boldness and confidence even to the end (iii. 6), take hold of the confession (iv. 14; vi. 11, 17, 18; x. 19, 22, 23). The reverse side of the picture is likewise given in varied phrase. It consists in their apostacy from the living God (iii. 12; *cf.* xii. 25), in neglecting the Salvation wrought for them so that they drift away from it

(ii. 3, 1), in coming short of the Sabbath rest prepared for them (iv. 1), in falling back from the grace of God (xii. 15), in casting away their boldness which has yet so great recompense (x. 35). In all these things, so says the author, they crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame; they even trample Him under their feet, count the Blood of the New Covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace (x. 29).

If, as was generally supposed in former days, this epistle was addressed to men who were tempted to pass over or revert to Judaism, the expressions used above would be quite unintelligible, one might even say perversely chosen. They can indeed only be understood on the supposition that apostacy to heathenism was in the author's mind. Even the central thought of those discussions which lend force to the reiterated warning, namely the demonstration of the High-priesthood of Jesus, never enters into conflict with Jewish ordinances or religious ideas. On the contrary, these are

accepted and used as premisses in the author's trains of argument (i. 1 *f.*, ii. 2 *f.* iii. 2–6); indeed, the whole force of his conclusions is made to rest upon their importance. Not, as with St Paul, do the Old and New Covenant stand here in opposition to one another: the latter is rather the fulfilment of the former. Of course with our author the Old Covenant does not signify, as with the Pharisee St Paul, the Law which regulates and formalises the private life, but rather the ceremonial ordinances of sacrifice and of the priesthood. And just because these are all so grand, so full of meaning, so divine, therefore the Christian conception of their fulfilment is the more worthy of acceptation. None of these trains of thought was of a character to warn men away from Judaism.

The author of this hortatory epistle shows himself a man of high note and a skilful writer. He is a theologian by profession, of the school of Alexandria, a cultivated orator and an artist in language. He knows the Old Testament but only in the Greek translation,

whose mistakes he slavishly follows without showing a trace of any perplexity which would have been caused by his knowledge of the Hebrew text. He seems to have kept his Greek text before him: at all events his quotations are very correct. He is however devoted to the classical, allegorical method of Alexandria, and by this means gives a new interpretation to the sacred scriptures of his nation. All things of the Old Testament are of importance to him—with these he concerns himself, not with the phenomena of the present; the Tabernacle, the Veil, the Camp, the Sacrifices, the High Priest, the Sabbath are all for him only passing shadows, prophetic types of heavenly realities (viii. 5, ix. 24, x. 1). Christianity has first brought these realities within men's reach. The Christians are the true people of God (iv. 9), the seed of Abraham (ii. 16), the house of God (x. 21). Even now, however, final perfection lies in Heaven (xii. 22–29, iv. 9–11, xiii. 14).

But this Christian Alexandrian is not,

like his brother philosophers of Alexandria, interested in fantastic theological speculations as such. They have value for him only in so far as they can confirm his own personal religion and can support and explain his own experience as a Christian believer. He is through and through a man of religion and not of theology. And yet his religion is somewhat deficient in that inward depth of feeling, energy of character, and creative power which have made St Paul a hero of Christianity in spite of his Rabbinism. He ever continues in the sphere of discussions, of analogies, of exhortations, and of syllogisms. We scarcely ever discover in him the full heart-throb of simple and direct religious feeling; moreover he stands in no personal relation to the person of Christ. His Christ is the ascended High Priest who fulfils His exalted office within the eternal Tabernacle of Heaven, behind the veil which still ever separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies—who has gained admission thither

by His blood, by the offering of which He has wrought redemption for them that believe—who now stands before God as the eternal mediator, who ever intercedes for the people of God. It is only the historical result of the life and work of St Paul that is, as a matter of course, presupposed in this epistle. Christianity with our author is free from all subjection to the Mosaic Law, whose ordinances become simply prophetic types which are abolished in their fulfilment. Pauline theology is quite alien to his mind: he indeed had never passed through a Rabbinic school. The terms which St Paul had coined to express the fundamental conceptions of his Christian belief are not once used by him; he speaks his own language. His thoughts can be more easily grasped, and they develop more smoothly than those of the great Apostle, but they are also less deep and less powerful. The comparison is, however, unfair to him. When he is not measured by the standard of that giant champion of the faith he shows himself to be

a man of deep sincerity and of great breadth and richness of soul. He has laid an essential part of the foundation of the Catholic Church of the future. She needed only to substitute for the Heavenly High Priest an earthly representative—the Pope; and for His heavenly offering an earthly repetition of the same—the Mass.

This exhausts all the exact information we possess concerning the personality of our author, but he himself throws some little light upon the circumstances of his life. He once belonged to the circle of readers he addresses (xiii. 19), but at the time of writing he is living elsewhere, separated from them doubtless by force—*i.e.* by banishment (xiii. 23)—evidently in a place outside Italy where there were no native Christians but only some from Italy who are associated with him and now join in his greeting to the readers (xiii. 24). Yet he hopes soon to be restored to his own people, a contingency which had already been rendered possible in the case of Timotheus (xiii. 23).

It is vain and indeed futile to attempt to assign to our author one of the names known to us from the New Testament. In fact we know much less of the bearers of these names than of the character of the author of this epistle; at all events the claims of the author of the Acts, or of the writer of that epistle from the Roman to the Corinthian Church which has come down to us bearing the name of Clement of Rome, cannot be seriously considered. In spite of a near relationship which may be explained from proximity of date or even from direct dependence one upon the other, the difference in style and ideas is in each case much too great to favour the hypothesis of common authorship. Silas, who has been suggested by some, and likewise Barnabas, whom Tertullian names, could not well have written our epistle, for the former as a native of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 22) and the latter as a Levite (Acts iv. 36) must have been better informed concerning the arrangements of the Temple than our author shows himself; and besides, neither of them

could scarcely reckon himself a man of the second generation as does our author (ii. 3). Again, although no serious objection can be alleged against Luther's suggestion of Apollos, who was baptised at a late period in Ephesus (Acts xviii. 24 *f.*), it is just as impossible to bring forward a conclusive proof in its favour; for even among Christians of the second generation many besides Apollos could well have belonged to the Alexandrian school.

But where may we look for the first readers of the epistle? The idea that they were Christian Hebrews, that is Jewish Christians, as the title already borne by the epistle in the second century presupposes, is excluded by a correct appreciation of the epistle itself. Such a conclusion could only have been drawn at a time when clear insight into the conditions of primitive Christianity had been lost. The Old Testament was as much an authority for Christians as for Jews. Christians believed that all its ordinances were only prophetic of that which had become truth in Christianity; and

the method of allegorical interpretation without which this Christian position could not be established, was as common among the Greeks, who first employed it in the interpretation of Homer and Hesiod, as it was with the Jews, who indeed probably borrowed it from the Greeks. Besides, St Paul had already declared that Christians were the true children and heirs of Abraham and the Temple of God. It was only a small step further to describe them as those serving God in the Tabernacle, that is, in the tent of this earthly universe, when heaven had once come to be regarded as the Holy of Holies lying behind the veil. Such expressions, accordingly, do not justify us in assuming that the readers must have been Jews by birth. Their acquaintance with the Temple and the sacrifices is no more presupposed in this epistle than in St Paul's epistles to the Corinthians; our author even thinks it necessary to give all kinds of explanations which would have been quite superfluous for Jews (*e.g.* ix. 1–10). Indeed,

ordinances which are doubtless of Jewish origin are described as foreign to the readers (xiii. 9). Finally, the section xiii. 9–13 has nothing at all to do with the ritual of the Temple; if this were in the author's mind, he has been awkward enough in his choice of language. The camp out of which the Christians are to allow themselves to be driven, bearing in patience their Master's reproach because they have no abiding city here below and seek one that is to come, in the allegorical language of the epistle, represents this world; and beneath the imagery there lies the thought of threatening perils of persecution (x. 32–34) to which many of their leaders had already fallen victims (xiii. 7). Purely Jewish Christian communities are only to be supposed in Jerusalem; but every word of the section v. 11–vi. 3, wherein the condition of the readers is fairly clearly described, speaks against Jerusalem. From the Christians of Jerusalem had sprung the teachers of Christendom. They least of all could be described offhand as

without experience of the word of righteousness—at all events such language would be open to misunderstanding; with them faith in God, washings and layings-on of hands, the resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment, were from childhood elements of their personal religion. And while the readers are praised (vi. 10) in that they had ministered unto the saints and still ministered, the contrary statement would exactly suit the case of the Church of Jerusalem. Again, to no other Church could be applied less suitably the words (ii. 3) that "the Salvation having at the first been spoken through the Lord was confirmed unto us by them that heard." On the contrary, the readers were Gentiles in danger of falling back into heathenism rather than into Judaism under stress of persecution. We can scarcely imagine them as living elsewhere than in Rome, where Clement of Rome shortly afterwards makes considerable use of the epistle, where alone it was remembered that the epistle was not written by St Paul,

whither, moreover, Italians (xiii. 24) would naturally send greetings. The words of ii. 3 concerning the origin of Christianity, as well as the fact presupposed in xiii. 7 that prominent teachers known to the readers had suffered martyrdom, would well suit Rome, where St Peter and St Paul had died for the faith and where the more continuous persecution suggested throughout the epistle would most likely occur. Only we may suppose that other Italian Churches besides that of Rome were in the mind of the author, one of which, that of Putioli, perhaps the most ancient of all, was already in existence at the time of St Paul (Acts xxviii. 14). This seems to be shown by the words "they of Italy" used of those sending greeting (xiii. 24), by the emphasis laid upon "all" in the greeting sent to the leaders (xiii. 24; *cf.* 17), by the mention of different degrees of persecution (x. 33 *f.*, xiii. 3), and lastly, by the absence of details concerning the life of any particular church. The want of a formal address is also most natural

if the epistle was addressed to a succession of churches, like the commendatory letter given to Phœbe by St Paul (pp. 92*ff.*).

In regard to the date of the epistle, there is nothing to show that the Temple was still standing; besides, the epistle never speaks of the Temple but always of the Tabernacle. Moreover, the words of xiii. 14, "We have here no abiding city," would have gained special force if the earthly Jerusalem, the centre of the first generation of Christians, had then lain in ruins. The utterances of ii. 3 *f.*, v. 12, and x. 32 point with certainty to the second generation; also the author's acquaintance with different epistles of St Paul, together with the free attitude he adopts towards them, is more easily intelligible at a later date. The continued persecution, which must have been preceded by another (xiii. 7), cannot have been that of Nero. That persecution, the first of all, was due simply to the caprice of a tyrant; it died out with his death and did not extend beyond the limits of Rome.

On the other hand, all the references made in the epistle fit in with what we know concerning the persecution in the reign of Domitian; and so the epistle may well be assigned to the years 92–96 A.D.

### 3. The First Epistle of St Peter.

In this short letter the Epistle to the Hebrews has, as it were, a younger brother less inclined to religious speculation but on the other hand richer in feeling and in practical sense. Its fundamental principles, which are rather presupposed than discussed, coincide most closely with those of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Like the latter epistle it stands under the determining influence of the Old Testament, which is also used in the Greek translation and is interpreted in accordance with the same allegorical method. The idea of priesthood is here of similar importance (ii. 5–9, v. 4). The whole outlook is that of Alexandria. The author has the same sure

mastery of contemporary Greek, and shows it by his love for picturesque epithet and by a simple but telling rhetoric characterised especially by a disposition to antithesis (i. 6, 8, 11, 14*f.*, 18*f.*, etc.). He employs and develops his imagery with the greatest possible freedom (i. 7, 18 *f.*; ii. 2–5, 25; iii. 1–6). He also shows rhetorical skill in the construction of his epistle. He preserves his independence of St Paul and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, though he is greatly indebted to the former and is especially influenced by Rom. xii.–xiii.; indeed, the number of words and ideas peculiar to our author is very considerable. In passages such as i. 2, 3; iv. 11; v. 11, 10, 14, we may perhaps trace the influence of liturgical formularies.

The construction of the epistle is very simple. The address (i. 1 *f.*) is followed by an introductory section (i. 3–12) which alludes to the sure Salvation which, in spite of the sufferings of the present time (6–9), is pledged and guaranteed to Christians. It is of course

only on condition of conduct in accordance with this hope (i. 13–21), and especially right conduct towards brethren in the faith (i. 22–ii. 3), that this Salvation is sure (ii. 4–10). All this is meant as an introduction in order to call up the right mood in the soul of the reader, just as it is with the long introductory sections in the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 1–iv. 13). As in Hebrews iii. 1, the direct address to the readers begins at ii. 11. The following main division of the epistle falls into three sections. The first (ii. 11–iii. 7) describes the right course of conduct towards unbelievers in the various social relationships, culminating in the exhortation of iii. 8–12, which sums up the whole preceding section. The second section points to the blessing reserved for those who suffer in spite of their good conduct (iii. 13–iv. 6), and is again summed up in the exhortation of iv. 7–11. The third section, resting upon the promised blessing, incites the readers to courage in the midst of their sufferings (iv. 12–19), and exhorts the different classes of

the communities, and more especially their leaders the Elders, to mutual forbearance and edification (v. 1–5), again culminating in a general exhortation (v. 6–9). As in Hebrews xiii. 20 *f.*, a solemn blessing (v. 10 *f.*) leads on to the personal notices of v. 12–14, the first of which is a direct echo of Hebrews xiii. 22. And just as Timotheus is mentioned at the close of the Epistle to the Hebrews, so here we meet with Mark—companions respectively of St Paul and St Peter. The greetings and the concluding blessing remind us likewise of Hebrews xiii. 24 *f.*

It is evident that in this epistle the author is not in any way concerned with religious doctrine. His purpose in writing is to exhort and encourage. He intends that his readers should be confirmed in their Christian hope, in their assurance of salvation, and here again, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Hope" is the word used to describe the characteristic condition of a Christian (i. 3, 13, 21; iii. 5, 15; *cf.* Hebrews iii. 6; vi. 11, 18; vii. 19; x. 23;

xi. 1). This is the fundamental idea running through the whole epistle; and the readers need this exhortation because the times are indeed hard for them. There is no difficulty in recognising what it is that threatens to perplex them. A thing so strange, so unheard of, has come to pass that they are utterly confounded (iv. 12)—they are slandered (ii. 12), and must suffer for the very name of Christian (iv. 15 *f.*). What is meant by these sufferings is shown by the reference to the sufferings of Jesus (ii. 21–23, iii. 18, iv. 13) and the comparison with what a criminal has to suffer. It has already come to such a pass that they are in danger of their lives (iv. 19, v. 8; *cf.* iv. 16); they are as it were passing through a purifying fire, which is the prelude to the End of the world and the final Judgment (i. 7; iv. 13, 17). These sufferings are of manifold kinds (i. 6). It is however plain, from iv. 16, iii. 15 *f.*, and the exhortation of ii. 13–17, that they often take the form of judicial trials before the authorities; moreover,

from the designation of Rome as Babylon (v. 13) we may conclude that the persecution was most severe.

Rapid perusal of this epistle makes one realise how well it must have supplied the need of these hunted Christians. Its author, with warm heart and perfect sympathy, incites them to take heart and courage and to direct their thoughts upward to the glory that is to come—as at the very beginning of his epistle, i. 3–12, especially 4 *f.*, and again i. 13, 20 *f.*, so also in the last part, iv. 12 *f.*; v. 4, 9, 10. He calms their minds by pointing to the suffering of their Master (ii. 21–24). They listen to the message of one who is sincere and full of joyful hope, whose supreme interest lies in practical ethical questions, who neither descends to pathos nor makes much demand upon their intellect nor loses himself in the depths of mysticism. There is in this epistle as little trace of intimate personal relationship with Christ—such as that seen in St Paul—as there is in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The historical personality of our Saviour, whose personal name Jesus is never mentioned in this epistle, completely gives place to the glorious form of the Risen and Expected Lord. The past has even less interest for our author than for the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; his gaze is fixed upon the light of the future. We may no doubt trace in his work echoes of the Logia of St Matthew; but he never quotes words of our Lord, and the leading conceptions of the Logia—such as Kingdom of God, Son of God, Son of Man, and the like—are entirely lacking in this epistle. Even the sufferings of our Lord are not painted after the pattern of our evangelists but in accordance with the prophetic picture of Isaiah liii.

It is evident that St Peter cannot have written this epistle. The oldest personal disciple of our Lord would never have omitted the slightest reference to that which must above all things have distinguished him in the eyes of his readers. And how, especially at

such a critical time, could he have refrained from speaking of reminiscences which formed the best, the most inspiring, message that he could deliver? All those supposed traits of St Peter, that men find in the very indefinite portrait of the author which we derive from this epistle, are merely products of a fancy which reads into the work what it wishes to find there. If he wrote in Babylon, why does he make no allusion to the condition of Christians in that city? How comes it that he has in that remote spot such close information concerning the welfare of the Christians of Asia Minor? Why is it that no tradition exists concerning his activity in Babylon? How could his memory have been obliterated in the later legend concerning Simon the Canaanean as the missionary apostle of Babylon? If he wrote in Rome, why is there no word about St Paul who must have been either living there or must have just suffered a martyr's death? We remember also that this letter is addressed to communities which

were for the most part founded by St Paul. Again, if St Peter was the author, the epistle must have been written at the time of the Neronian persecution. But all the information we possess goes to show that this persecution did not extend into the provinces. It is of course absolutely impossible that the letter could have been written before the time of St Paul. On the other hand, if Babylon is here as in the Book of Revelation a metonym for Rome—an hypothesis which is supported by the mention of St Mark in v. 13 (*cf.* Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11), as well as by the constant dependence of this epistle upon the Epistle to the Romans and by its near relationship to the Epistle to the Hebrews—then the assigning of our epistle to the time of the persecution of Domitian, 92–96 A.D., makes it intelligible from every point of view. This, however, at once excludes the authorship of St Peter, and we are compelled to ascribe the letter to some devoted disciple of the Apostle who, as it were, lends his pen to his sainted

patron. He may perhaps be the Silvanus who is so pointedly mentioned in v. 12. This man, after his separation from St Paul, may have companied with St Peter, as did St Mark according to the certainly authentic testimony of a tradition we have referred to in connection with the Gospels. Moreover, these two men were both natives of Jerusalem. According to this view, the glorified Apostle had as it were entrusted this word of exhortation to Silvanus the "faithful brother," while the addition "as I account him" might have sprung from the modesty of the real writer. The thought of the readers he was addressing may also have contributed to move the author to ascribe the epistle to St Peter. This apostle, who without doubt died in Rome, and, as later tradition shows, quite cast St Paul into the shade in the memory of the Roman Church, had, according to 1 Cor. ix. 5, likewise made missionary journeys. After St Paul's imprisonment he might quite well have founded communities in the provinces of Asia

Minor, especially in Pontus Cappadocia and Bithynia, which St Paul had not visited. But even apart from this supposition, the high and acknowledged authority of St Peter, to which we have ample testimony not only in the later legends of the Roman Church but also in the Gospels themselves, is sufficient to account for this attempt as it were to call back to earth again the spirit of the great Apostle that he might strengthen the churches at the time of their sore distress.

The recipients of the epistle, according to the address, were the Christians of the churches of Asia Minor. We note that Pontus in the extreme east is first mentioned. It is possible that St Peter first preached the Gospel in that province. The other provinces follow in a kind of historical order, in so far as Galatia, St Paul's first field of labour, was the mother province of Cappadocia, and Asia, which came later under his hand, was the mother province of Bithynia. The description of these Christians as "elect so-

journers of the dispersion" is an appropriation in an allegorical sense of Jewish religious phraseology and is characteristic of the style of the whole epistle. The Christians are sojourners because the world around them is still heathen; they are of the dispersion because they must dwell in this world though they are the holy priesthood, the chosen generation, the peculiar people of God (ii. 5–9). For the most part they consist of the newly converted (ii. 2 *f.*, iv. 3 *f.*, ii. 25), who still well remember the time before their conversion, though there may well have been some among them who were Christians of long standing and even some who had had Christian parents. They were certainly Gentile Christians, who had nothing to do with the Jewish Law. The epistle brings to light no trace of inward dissention in the communities. Perhaps this is only because the author's knowledge was somewhat inadequate; perhaps also the persecutions had repressed all tendencies to dissention. At

all events the author had no occasion to enter upon controversial religious questions. Though the tone of this epistle is more personal and intimate, its presentation of Christianity is not much deeper and richer in thought than that of the Acts of the Apostles. But this simplicity of thought joined with intimacy of appeal, this lofty moral earnestness joined with joyous, indeed jubilant, hope—amid a prevailing atmosphere of trial and affliction so that we are constantly reminded of the tone of St Paul's Epistle to the Philippians—all combine to make this short, impressive letter one of the most precious monuments of primitive Christianity, a jewel of the New Testament worthy to be inscribed with the name of the great Apostle.

### 4. The Epistle to the Ephesians.

In spite of the close relationship of the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians to the Acts of the Apostles and the First Epistle of St Peter,

it is essentially superior to both in breadth of thought; it also surpasses the Epistle to the Hebrews in force of appeal, because it makes less use of the language of theology and allegory and brings its intention and purpose to direct expression in words that can be easily understood. The arrangement of the epistle is admirable. Leaving out of account the address i. 1 *f.* and the conclusion vi. 19–24, it falls into two parts of similar length which are sharply divided from one another by an ascription of praise (iii. 20 *f.*), just as the two main divisions of the Epistle to the Romans are separated by Rom. xi. 33–36. In the first part (i. 3–iii. 19), which to the author is evidently the more important, the first and last sections (i. 3–19, iii. 1–21) closely correspond to one another. The first section begins with a description of the Christian state of Salvation (i. 3–14), with a separate reference to Jews by birth (11 *f.*) and Gentiles (13 *f.*); then follows a wish, dwelt upon in many words, that the readers may have perfect knowledge of the

greatness of this Salvation (i. 15–19). In the last section, after the statement that St Paul is the appointed champion of this knowledge (iii. 1–13), the writer again prays that the readers may apprehend and appropriate to themselves the Salvation in all its abundance (iii. 14–21). This is enough to show us that the passage (i. 20–ii. 22) which is framed between these two sections forms the kernel of the first division of the epistle. We may be sure that this section is intended to supply the readers with the knowledge which is so earnestly desired for them. It is here first shown in detail that the Christian state of Salvation is assured by the pre-eminent glory and power of Christ (i. 20 *f.*) and is imparted to the individual through Christ's connection with the Christian Church (i. 22 *f.*), and it is then brought home to the readers how they have been thus saved from a situation of despair and transported into the life of Heaven (ii. 1–10). The passage now reaches its climax in ii. 11–22, where in impressive tones it is

proclaimed that this Salvation, thus secured and thus imparted, is granted equally to both groups into which men were divided before Christ's ministry—to Jews and Gentiles, to the far and the near—so that the wall of partition between them has been broken down, peace has been restored, and both have become in Christ one new man and now through Him both have access in one Spirit to the Father. "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners but ye are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone: in whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit" (ii. 19–22).

The second main division (chaps. iv.–vi.) shows still more clearly that this thought, which so inspires the author that in its expression his style becomes even lyrical, is the

climax of the epistle. Here again as in the first part of the epistle, we have a section at the beginning (iv. 1–16) corresponding to one at the end (vi. 10–18). In the first section the writer makes an urgent appeal that the walk should be one worthy of this Salvation which is common to all, and he emphasises all the virtues by which alone unity in the bond of peace can be preserved among men (iv. 1–3); then in close connection with the first part he proceeds to describe—again in lofty, lyrical style—the foundation (4–6), the means (7–11), and the end (12–15) of the Christian Life; and finally (16) he returns to the thought which forms the climax of the first part of the epistle, using the same imagery (*cf.* ii. 19–22). The last section (vi. 10–18), which in verse 11 directly connects with iv. 14, summons the Christian, under the glorious simile of a fully armed and prayerful warrior, to a firm stand in a warfare which is waged not against flesh and blood but against all those powers of the spiritual world which have been already referred to in iii. 10.

Between these two sections an ethical catechism for Gentile Christians (iv. 17–vi. 9), starting from a description of the former heathen and the present Christian condition (iv. 17–24), states in detail the duties of a Christian both as an individual (iv. 25–v. 21) and in society (v. 22–vi. 9), but without any reference to particular circumstances of the communities —a point wherein this catechism of Christian morality is sharply distinguished from all similar passages in the letters of St Paul. But also in the first part of his epistle the author always addresses Christians in general, never Christians or separate communities with definite characteristics or under particular conditions. And similarly it is always Jews and Gentiles in general that are contrasted with these Christians, not separate Jewish or Gentile personalities. No kind of personal relationship between the author and his readers can be discerned. His work reads like a stirring pamphlet—nay, like an awakening cry sent forth abroad wherever it may find a hearer; it is a Christian program

for the future—or rather a trumpet-blast proclaiming peace within, summoning to war outside.

The purpose of the epistle is very clear. It does not aim at smoothing over particular difficulties or combating strange ideas or perverse tendencies. Indeed, the gaze of the author passes high above all that is concrete; he sees it not, it is not there for him. He has grander objects in view. With joyous gladness his spirit sees the rise of a new humanity, in which the enmity that divided the old humanity into two hostile camps, the separation between Jew and Gentile, is abolished once and for all. He overflows with earnest desire to bring everything to bear which may strengthen this unity and prevent every revival of the old schism. Neither party must reproach the other for its past (ii. 1–7). They both have need of the same Salvation, they both have reached it in exactly the same way (i. 11–14. ii. 16*f.*). And the very means by which they have been reconciled with God has also abolished the

Jewish Law that separated and set them at enmity with one another, and has broken down the wall of partition (ii. 13–16). Now there is one body and one spirit even as they both are called in one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. This gospel of the unity of Christians rests upon the authority of the apostles and prophets (ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11). It is the glory of St Paul that he perceived and proclaimed it (iii. 1–14). Nay more, this amalgamation of Jew and Gentile into one people rests upon a preordaining counsel of God before the foundation of the world (i. 4 *f.*, 11; iii. 5 *f.*). And in the mind of the author the aim of Christ's Redemption is not so much the saving of individual souls as this union of mankind into one new people (ii. 14–16). This people, this Church is the object of the love of Christ (v. 26 *f.*, 29–32). It is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. But it has a further lofty function to fulfil; it

must fight out to the end the mighty conflict with the spiritual powers of this world (iii. 10, vi. 10–19).

We must not imagine that the author knew of actual dissentions in Christendom, or that one tendency or conception of Christianity was at this time asserting itself in opposition to another or was demanding concessions from another. The epistle at least does not touch upon such matters. It is above all a hymn of unity; in quite general terms it exhorts Christians to hold fast to and to rejoice in this glorious prize. The writer would by his exposition abolish even the last most secret traces of former discord—such for instance as peep out from the past in ii. 21—if they still exist anywhere. He would awaken in each of his readers the feeling of perfect unity, that this alone may fill every soul. He demands from all only Love (i. 15; iii. 17 *f.*; iv. 2, 15, 16; v. 2), and Peace (ii. 14, 15, 17; iv. 3; vi. 15, 23 *f.*).

There is no doubt that Gentiles form the

great majority among those to whom the epistle is addressed. The writer thinks of them when he directly addresses his readers (i. 13 *f.*; ii. 11–13, 19, etc.). They are warned to fight against their heathen propensities (iv. 14, 17–vi. 9). They seem inclined to despise the tradition of faith (iii. 1–13, ii. 20, iv. 7–13), and to despise the Jews whose prerogatives are therefore gently asserted (i. 11 *f.*; ii. 11 *f.*, 19; iii. 8; vi. 17). Our author, in words which remind us of the exhortation of Hebrews x. 25, bids them hold fast to that close fellowship which was so alien to their old ideas (ii. 11–22; iii. 15, 18; iv. 3, 15 *f.*). To Jewish Christians the writer has nothing to say; only in the passages ii. 8–10, 15, there may lie a point, though indeed it is much disguised, that is directed against Jewish tendencies. The very warmth with which the epistle emphasises the reconciliation between Jew and Gentile prevents us from regarding the Jewish Christians as insignificant in number and importance when compared with their Gentile brethren, or as

lying outside the horizon of the author who includes himself among them in the "we" of i. 11 *f.* We must therefore conclude that, at all events in the communities which the author has in view, they had desisted from all attempts to impose Jewish ordinances upon the Gentile Christians and had even renounced their own manner of life in accordance with the Law.

All which has hitherto been said concerning this epistle, its form, its content, its ideas, its presuppositions, absolutely excludes the possibility of a Pauline authorship. It is true that every sentence contains verbal echoes of Pauline epistles; indeed, except where ideas peculiar to the epistle come to expression, it is simply a mosaic of Pauline phraseology. But this very fact makes it impossible to ascribe the letter to one who was of so original a spirit and so rarely repeated himself as St Paul. The somewhat turgid long-winded periods, the fulness of expression which oftentimes borders upon the superfluous, the constant addition or

insertion of qualifying phrases whose logical connection is often scarcely discernible, the tendency to the pathetic, the elevated, almost lyrical style which pervades the whole epistle —all this stands in bold contrast with the somewhat sketchy and always pointed style of St Paul, with whom the depth and fulness of the thoughts that crowded upon him seem ever struggling with the inadequacy of mere words as a means of expression. On the other hand, there is in this epistle a complete absence of those final and consecutive conjunctions which St Paul so constantly employs. Other expressions which are used by St Paul only in their full connotation here become formulas; so especially the Pauline phrase "In the Lord" or "In Christ," which, counting synonyms, occurs no less than twelve times in the single passage i. 1–14, while it appears only eleven times in the whole Epistle to the Colossians. Together with the whole post-Pauline literature this epistle speaks of "the devil," in contrast to St Paul who uses the

word "Satan." Heaven is described, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, by the phrase "the heavenly things." St Paul again could never have used the expression "the holy apostles and prophets" (iii. 5), or have described the essence of Christianity in the phrase "Love with Faith" (vi. 23), which stands in such sharp contrast to the Pauline "Faith working through Love" (Gal. v. 6). Above all, the constant use that is made of the Epistle to the Colossians —except those portions which deal with questions relating to the Colossian community —in the second half of our epistle, is not to be thought of in connection with St Paul. Such a man as he does not write himself out, nor does he repeat himself when in his second writing he follows aims so entirely different. In two twin letters like these he could not have combined with the same word a different significance in the separate letters, as is undoubtedly the case in these two epistles with the words "Fulness," "Household," "Mystery"; nor could he in the

later epistle have again and again made use of a number of characteristic phrases which never fell from his pen as he wrote the epistle which served as his pattern.

However, all these characteristics, which separate the Epistle to the Ephesians from St Paul, set it beside the Acts, the Hebrews, and the First Epistle of St Peter. Indeed its relationship with the first two of these writings, both in vocabulary and characteristic ideas, is so remarkably close that we are puzzled to find a reason why the authors of both should have shown such a preference for our epistle above all others that are assigned to St Paul. In other points, however, it shows the same measure of affinity with the Pastoral Epistles. It stands approximately in the middle of the gap which separates these writings from St Paul, perhaps nearer to them than to St Paul. Moreover, in this epistle we mark a great advance in the development that culminates in the Johannine writings, greater even than in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We mention

only the most important points of agreement: —In our epistle as in the Gospel of St John, Christ takes upon Himself what is elsewhere assigned to God; so also in both cases the Death of Christ falls into the background. Here again we may note that St Paul would scarcely have omitted a reference to the Death of Christ in such passages as i. 15–ii. 10, 11–14; iii. 1–21; iv. 1–16; ii. 14–16. The single reference to the Death (i. 7) comes from Col. i. 14; it is elsewhere regarded only as a model for Christian endurance. Again in this epistle Christ is represented as standing in relation to the Church, not to individual men as with St Paul; Christ indeed has entered into a mystic marriage with the Church. Our author takes no account of the Law, nor does he make use of the Old Testament as an authority for his teaching; words from the Old Testament indeed occur here and there in his epistle, but always interwoven in his own text. He speaks of the existence of a whole hierarchy of Church officers to whom authority is ascribed — apostles,

prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (iv. 11): here again the epistle comes into contact with Acts xxi. 8 and 2 Tim. iv. 5. As in the Acts so in this epistle St Paul is in all things one with the apostles (ii. 20, iii. 5 *f.*), by which term without doubt the Twelve are chiefly signified. Also the not infrequent occurrence of passages which sound like solemn liturgical formularies makes us feel that we are out of touch with the original and living utterance of St Paul. We moreover can scarcely fail to perceive that our author is somehow acquainted with the Greek mysteries, and that he here and there borrows from them both terms and ideas which he presses into the service of Christianity.

As we inquire into the circumstances of the origin of this characteristic epistle we find that the imagery of vi. 11–18 implies a bitter conflict with the powers of the world that is already past and is to be expected in the future, and thus directs us to the last years of Domitian—perhaps, indeed, to a time after the

close of the reign of that monarch. For the deliberate calm and yet enthusiastic presentation of grand ideals given in this writing would not well suit a time disturbed by a very struggle for existence; and besides, the author never implies that his readers were at the time suffering persecution. The fact that Judaism retires so much into the background permits the conclusion that Jerusalem was now destroyed. The relationship with the Acts and the Pastoral Epistles favours the end of the first century. Detailed investigations of the numerous points of contact of our epistle with 1 Peter, though starting from the most varied premisses, have always led to the conclusion that the latter epistle lay before our author when he wrote: this also points to the end of the century. The close relationship of Ephesians with 1 Peter might suggest Rome as the place of origin; but our author could well have become acquainted with 1 Peter in Asia Minor, whither that epistle was sent. The latter conjecture is supported by the

relationship of our epistle with the Acts and with the later Johannine literature; also by the use that it makes of Colossians; and lastly, by the important fact that no knowledge of it is shown in the epistle of Clement of Rome nor even perhaps in the Shepherd of Hermas. Again, we receive in this way the best explanation of the strange history of its address. It was remembered in the third and even in the fourth century that the words "at Ephesus" were originally wanting in the address of Ephesians. The letter was originally addressed to "the Saints in Christ which also are faithful" —that is, to all true Christians wherever they dwelt (i. 1). How then did the letter come by the address Ephesus? Surely, it is most natural to suppose, because Ephesus was the centre whence the knowledge of this epistle was principally disseminated. Nor is it hardt o understand why the author chose St Paul to convey his message to the Christians of his days. St Paul was the founder of the great Gentile Church, the father of the thought that in Christ

there is neither Jew nor Greek, the great champion of reconciliation between both parties. Our author moreover, among all early Christians whose writings have come down to us, was the nearest, the most congenial in spirit of the disciples of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. It was the life-work of his master that he would now bring to perfection, it was the master's own spirit that now inspired him. Indeed, why might not St Paul himself when his imprisonment at Rome had snatched him away from the scene of active conflict—why might not he have given utterance among his little band of faithful followers to similar thoughts concerning the unifying power of Christianity, without of course making them the central point of the Gospel as happens in this epistle? And if the tone of our epistle verges somewhat upon the apocalyptic (i. 17; iii. 3, 5), this tendency in the author would of itself suggest his speaking in the name of some hero of the past. The peculiarly close relationship of our epistle with

the Epistle to the Colossians may be due to very various causes. That epistle, omitting the absolutely personal effusion to the Philippians, was the last from the hand of St Paul, and, as can be proved, was the least widely known. When St Paul wrote it he was separated from fellowship with his churches, like the Paul whom our author feels to be the spiritual father of our epistle. Moreover, in Colossians the Gentile apostolate of St Paul is presented more clearly and less controversially than in any of the epistles written in the midst of the conflicts of his active mission. Our author may also have been attracted by the table of duties given in Colossians, and by the number of expressions which echo the language of the mysteries wherein that epistle stands in striking contrast to the other letters of St Paul. If the latter suggestion be true, a most significant light is thrown upon the petition that is placed in the mouth of the Apostle at the close of Ephesians (vi. 19 *f.*). The author has not exerted himself to prove

that this letter was really written by St Paul. He refrains, like the author of 1 Peter, from all reference to concrete traits and particulars. The solitary and insignificant exception, the mention of Tychicus (vi. 21 *f.*), which scarcely goes beyond the mere ascription of the epistle to St Paul, is taken verbally from Col. iv. 7 *f.* Is it possible that Tychicus was the real author of our epistle?

The fundamental thought of this epistle, as well as the manner in which it is established and developed, prove the author to have been a man of lofty far-seeing and full mind, grander in his ideas than the author of the Acts and 1 Peter and more in touch with practical life than the author of Hebrews. The epistle only gains in significance by being removed from among the letters of St Paul. It then first takes its own peculiar and important station within the sphere of early Christian literature. Its greatest significance however lies in the fact that, in another sphere than the Epistle to the Hebrews, it has given to

Catholicism one of its most potent ideas—the idea of unity. The Catholic Church has learned and borrowed more from this epistle than from all the writings of St Paul taken together.

### 5. The Pastoral Epistles.

In the continuation of the line which leads from St Paul to Acts and Ephesians there now lie three epistles, again bearing the name of St Paul, which we are accustomed to comprehend under the name Pastoral Epistles. They afford unmistakable signs of literary unity, and yet by their difference they also testify to a development within themselves. They speak the same language and move in the same sphere of interests; they all present the same short form of concluding blessing; the two epistles to Timothy have the same peculiar form of introductory greeting; they all show in the main the same construction. That which separates them from

St Paul binds them together. The most ancient of them is that epistle which, because of its brevity, has been given the second place in the collection—namely, the so-called Second Epistle to Timothy. Its substance is as follows:—After the address (i. 1 *f.*) comes, as an introduction, an expression of the personal relations between the writer and the recipient of the letter (i. 3–5), a note which is repeated in the conclusion with its striking fulness of personal allusion (iv. 9–22). The central portion of the epistle falls into three parts: (1) an exhortation to Timothy to act as a faithful and courageous steward of the Apostle's heritage, the more so because others have turned away from him (i. 6–ii. 13); (2) a discussion of the particular phenomena in the churches entrusted to Timothy which make such an exhortation necessary (ii. 14–iii. 9); (3) an emphatic repetition of the exhortations of the first part (iii. 10–iv. 8).

The construction of the Epistle to Titus is absolutely similar and equally transparent.

Between the introduction combined with the address (i. 1–4) and the personal notices of the conclusion (iii. 12–15) are found three sections: (1) a direction concerning the appointment of presbyters (i. 5–9); (2) a discussion of the heresies which make this action necessary (i. 10–16); (3) a list of duties (ii. 1–iii. 7). This list of duties, as with St Paul, is divided into rules for the conduct of the different orders in the community (ii. 1–15) and rules for conduct towards those outside (iii. 1–7), and in each case the set of rules is followed by a passage giving its religious basis (ii. 11–14, iii. 3–7). This epistle, compared with the first-mentioned, represents a more advanced state of affairs. Heresy has further developed and has grown in importance (*cf.* i. 10–16 with 2 Tim. ii. 18, iii. 6 *f.*). It is described more distinctly and more sternly condemned. While in the one case gentleness and patience are commended, in this epistle energetic repression is advised; and while Timothy is bid to see to the matter himself,

Titus must institute a presbytery to help him to combat the false teachers.

It is only because of later additions that the so-called First Epistle to Timothy has reached the size that has given it the premier position. For while chaps. i.–iv. with vi. 3–16 may be perhaps regarded as a fairly connected epistle, the thread is absolutely broken at v. 1. What comes before and after vi. 3–16 consists of short disconnected directions or regulations for different sections of the community in the following order:—a direction prescribing the behaviour of the head of the community towards different sexes and ages (v. 1 *f.*), a regulation concerning widows (v. 3–16), an ordinance concerning presbyters (v. 17–25), and rules concerning slaves (vi. 1 *f.*); while after vi. 3–16 comes a charge to the rich (vi. 17–19), and finally an energetic warning against a knowledge falsely so called (vi. 20 *f.*). If we leave on one side these appendices which give to the epistle the character of a compilation of social rules, the remainder approximates

closely to the two other epistles in construction and aim. Again an introduction, i. 3–20, following the address i. 1 *f.* and a conclusion vi. 3–16, form the framework of the body of the epistle which falls into three parts, of which the first two are closely bound up with one another. The first part contains directions for the Christian life; first the attitude toward the civil authorities is prescribed (ii. 1–7), then the conduct in society with separate regulations for men and women (ii. 8–15). The second part gives rules for the officers of the community, the bishops and deacons (iii. 1–13). Then these two parts are marked off as a complete whole by a solemn conclusion (iii. 14–16) which rounds off what has preceded. This general catechism or code of rules is nothing else than an amplification of the Epistle to Titus, with the exception of the passage against heresy (Tit. i. 10–16). The omitted passage of the Epistle to Titus, together with the similar passages of 2 Timothy, are worked up into

the regulations against heretics which form the third part of our epistle. Here also we note at every point an advance upon the conditions disclosed in the two other epistles. There is a further development of heresy; the organisation of the community calls for much more detailed regulations than those of the Epistle to Titus; and a much more authoritative position is assigned to Timothy.

It is impossible that these epistles as they stand can have been written by St Paul. The heresy presupposed in them, in which moral laxity is combined with an ascetic tendency, had probably its precursors in the phenomena which are combated in Hebrews xiii. 9 and Acts xx. 29 *f.*, but it does not show itself during the life of St Paul and it is scarcely probable that it could then have reached such dimensions. Certainly that Apostle would have combated it with other means than those commended in these epistles. The idea of a rigid ecclesiastical organisation is absolutely foreign to St Paul: he builds

not upon Church offices but upon the Spirit. He moreover never claims for himself such a position of authority as do these epistles which here proceed along the path of development begun in Ephesians iii. 1–13. In these epistles the teaching of St Paul is "the sound doctrine"—it is as it were canonical—and their one object is to preserve in its purity this apostolic heritage. This trait closely coincides with what is praised as befitting conduct in the Acts in that memorable phrase "abiding in the Apostle's doctrine" (Acts ii. 42), which is further developed in St Paul's speech at Miletus (xx. 17–35). Those, however, whose business it is to guard this apostolic heritage are the persons to whom the epistles are addressed and the Church officers under their commission and control; to these therefore is assigned an authoritative position in the community. A striking parallel to the personal position of authority which is assigned to Timothy, especially in the first epistle, will come before our notice in our

discussion of the Johannine writings. This development is again a continuation of that which we noticed in the Epistle to the Ephesians. In that epistle the Church was described as an authoritative entity: in the Pastoral Epistles the Church gains its necessary administrative organs. We note besides that the beginning of the development of formal creeds is here shown more clearly than in the other writings of the post-Pauline period that have as yet come under our consideration (*cf.* 2 Tim. ii. 8; 1 Tim. iii. 16, vi. 13).

But leaving out of account these great leading ideas, there are details in the epistles which make it impossible that St Paul could have written them. A multitude of expressions which are current in the epistolary style of these writings, and are here hardened into fixed ideas, never occur in the genuine letters of St Paul; on the other hand, there is a total absence of the characteristic expressions in which St Paul prefers to clothe

his ideas. The style again is completely different. Points are briefly asserted, not proved. The conjunctions "so then" and "wherefore," which combine sentence with sentence in logical connection and are indispensable to the style of St Paul, are lacking in these epistles. Neither in language nor ideas do they show the influence of the Old Testament; on the other hand, as we read them we constantly meet with Greek ideas, while echoes of and allusions to Greek literature again and again fall upon our ears.

We come now to a third point which is important in this connection. The situation presupposed in these epistles, and above all the relations that are supposed to exist between the Apostle and his two fellow-workers, are quite out of harmony with what we know of the life and character of St Paul. Can we imagine that St Paul was really obliged to exhort Timothy and Titus again and again to be faithful? Could the Apostle in writing to them have been obliged to

vindicate himself as he is represented in these epistles? (2 Tim. iii. 10; Tit. i. 3; 1 Tim. i. 11, ii. 7). Both circumstances are alone intelligible on the supposition that the writer justifies the measures against heretics recommended in these epistles because they answer to the duty of fidelity to the Apostle, who must be defended against any diminution of his authority. But also the historical circumtances presupposed in these epistles cannot be reconciled with the actual course of history. The most striking discrepancy appears in 1 Timothy, the latest of the three. St Paul has caused his fellow-worker to tarry in Ephesus, and hopes soon to go thither himself (i. 3 *f.*, iii. 14, iv. 13). If St Paul arranged this by letter, it must have been done when he started from Corinth to Macedonia (Acts xx. 4 *f.*). But how can this be reconciled with the report of Acts xix. 22 that Timothy with Erastus were sent on beforehand from Ephesus to Macedonia? And why does St Paul afterwards pass by Ephesus?

(Acts xx. 16). If St Paul made the arrangement by word of mouth, it could only have taken place before his departure from Ephesus (Acts xx. 1). But this also is irreconcilable with xix. 22. Again, why is the Apostle compelled, after so short an absence, to give Timothy such detailed instructions, seeing that the occasion—that is, the appearance of false teachers—is, according to the epistle itself, no sudden unexpected phenomenon? (i. 3, 18). Why does he make no reference to his own ministry in Ephesus? Why does he not come himself? But all these objections are secondary to the most fatal of all that while this epistle is certainly the latest in date of the three, it must have been the earliest according to the situation it presupposes.

It is somewhat otherwise with the other two epistles which also furnish some few data which fix the situations under which they are supposed to be written. According to the Epistle to Titus, St Paul had left Titus behind in Crete where Zenas and Apollos had now

visited him (iii. 13). Titus is to be shortly relieved by Tychicus or Artemas and is then to meet St Paul in Nicopolis, where he has determined to winter (iii. 12). This is all intelligible in itself and as a part of the life of St Paul, and the fulness of particulars gives an impression of authenticity. St Paul himself could well have touched at Crete during the journey of Acts xx. 3; at all events, Titus could well have been commissioned by him to preach the Gospel there. The route which St Paul proposes for himself in this epistle is, of course, discrepant with the forecast in 1 Cor. xvi. 6. But this might easily have been due to circumstances, which often compelled St Paul to change his plans. Apollos may have fallen in with St Paul, perhaps at the time when he (Apollos) was about to pay his purposed visit to Corinth (1 Cor. xvi. 12), and St Paul may have asked him to take Crete on his way. But the rest of the epistle is quite impossible. Why does St Paul tell Titus (i. 5) what he

already knew? Had the latter neglected his commission that he must be so plainly reminded of it? Why does the Apostle impart to him far-reaching directions concerning the organisation of the churches (i. 5–9) at the very moment that he is about to recall him? Why does he give such a close description of the false teachers (i. 10–16) when he can only have known of them through Titus himself? This discrepancy between the different parts of our epistle is fairly easily removed by the hypothesis that it is based upon a small letter from St Paul to Titus his fellow-worker, a letter which consisted of the first words of i. 1 and i. 4 as an address, and iii. 12–15. This tablet, which St Paul sent to his representative in Crete probably with the very persons Zenas and Apollos, whom he commends to Titus, formed the framework for the instructions and discussions of the present epistle in which the glorified Apostle is made to address himself to the problems of an essentially later date.

The condition of things is exactly similar

in the case of the Second Epistle to Timothy. Nearly all the data so bountifully given in this epistle suit excellently the presupposed situation of the imprisonment in Rome, and agree with or can be readily harmonised with what we learn concerning this imprisonment from St Paul's epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. Only the notice in iv. 20 does not tally with Acts xx. 4 and xxi. 29; and the idea of Timothy's extreme youthfulness which might be deduced from i. 5 (*cf.* 1 Tim. iv. 12), would scarcely suit one who had already travelled ten or twelve years with St Paul and had been constantly entrusted with difficult undertakings by that apostle. But all the ideas and regulations of this epistle fall under the same suspicion as that which has been already described. Hence we are led to the same conjecture as in the case of the Epistle to Titus. This epistle also is based upon a letter, this time a much longer one, sent from Rome by the captive Apostle to his fellow-worker who was then in Ephesus. This

genuine letter was amplified at a much later date by regulations in which the Apostle was intended to impart his counsel to a later generation. To this original letter we may without hesitation assign i. 1 *f.*, 3–5*a*, 7 *f.*, 15–18; iv. 6–22 (except 20), perhaps also ii. 1, 3–12*a*, from the middle portion of our epistle.

The employment of genuine Pauline letters in the production of a literary work of this kind is not unlike the employment of the Epistle to the Colossians by the author of Ephesians. Also the writer who edited these two small letters of St Paul to his friends, and composed 1 Timothy, is closely related in his ideas to the authors of Ephesians and the Acts and stands in about the same relation as they to the great Apostle St Paul. Like the author of 1 Peter, which epistle he certainly knew and indeed used in the composition of his two later epistles, he attaches himself most closely to St Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He also shows some traces of the influence of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Rome is

the first place that suggests itself for the birthplace of the Pastoral Epistles, because 2 Timothy, the earliest of them, professes to date from that city; but this would only prove that it is based upon a genuine Pauline letter proceeding from Rome. Their close spiritual affinity with Ephesians and the Acts points rather to Asia Minor, while their relationship with Clement of Rome and the strong tendency they manifest towards organisation and discipline again rather speak in favour of Rome. We cannot attain to certainty on this point, nor is it a matter of much importance. Neither may we hope for a very satisfactory answer to the question as to what churches the author had in view. The two earlier epistles may have been in the first place intended for the countries to which the genuine letters of St Paul, forming their framework, were sent—*i.e.* the Second Epistle to Timothy like Ephesians for the province of Asia, the Epistle to Titus for Crete (*cf.* i. 12). The First Epistle to Timothy pro-

bably was intended for the instruction of the whole of Christendom. Again we cannot fix definitely the date of these epistles. There is no reason to carry it too far into the second century; so late a date is indeed inconsistent with the absence of distinct reference to the phenomenon which dominated all Christian controversy from the third decade of the second century onwards, the so-called Gnosticism which is first noticed in the last appendix of the latest of the epistles (1 Tim. vi. 20 *f.*). The Second Epistle to Timothy may well have been about contemporary with the Acts and Ephesians. At a somewhat later date the same disciple of St Paul may have worked up the Epistle to Titus. The First Epistle to Timothy may belong to the second or third decade of the second century. When the various notices from v. 1 onwards were gradually appended it is impossible to determine.

This explanation of the nature of the Pastoral Epistles does not deprive them of

their significance, it only changes the character of that significance. Apart from the probability that we owe to the two earlier epistles the preservation of Pauline fragments which will ever remain precious because of the person from whose hand they come and upon whose career they throw a clearer light, these epistles become, according to the opinion we have advanced, authorities of unique importance for the gradual transformation which the ideas promulgated by St Paul underwent in the Greek world. They show us how much of these ideas was preserved, how much was still understood, how much was dropped in process of time; they witness to the reverence with which men regarded the great founder of Greek Christendom, to the increasing spiritual subjection of the later generations to the mighty past—to the first generation; and they testify to the purity and force of the conceptions to which Christians then adhered, conceptions still absolutely based upon religion though

the ethical spirit was gradually taking the first place. These writings moreover bring before our eyes that great transformation in Christendom, the last result of which was the Catholic Church. They show us, as authentic witnesses, how, under the perplexing influence of suspicious phases of Hellenism, the need arose for stricter organisation of the Christian communities, for closer adherence to the authorities of the past, for the creation of living authorities which should represent these. They show us how the purely religious interest gradually fell into the background compared with ethical and doctrinal interests, how creation was replaced by reproduction, how self-confidence vanished, and how in the place of living spiritual forces now appeared ordinances, offices, regulations. They form the documentary evidence for the laying of the foundation-stone of the Catholic Church.

## Appendix: The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.

Though the book of the New Testament known as the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians may well have been of earlier date than some of the post-Pauline writings that we have discussed in this section, it nevertheless does not lie in the main line of development of primitive Christianity. Had we therefore dealt with it earlier we should have disturbed our connected impression of that development without contributing to our comprehension of the epistle. It has accordingly been reserved for discussion in an appendix.

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians stands in the same relation to the First Epistle to the Thessalonians as the Epistle to the Ephesians to the Epistle to the Colossians, as the First Epistle to Timothy to its two precursors, and as the Second Epistle of St Peter stands to the Epistle of St Jude. It cannot

have been written by St Paul. For it is—apart from the section ii. 1–12 for the sake of which it was written—nothing but an extract, without a single new thought, from the genuine Epistle of St Paul to the Thessalonians, and yet in many a phrase it betrays the presence of a strange pen and an alien spirit—just as we found in the sections of Ephesians which had been taken from Colossians. St Paul cannot, in addressing the same community a second time, have copied from his own first letter decking up his earlier remarks in orator's style, and that too occasionally in a language foreign to himself. This is the more suspicious because these foreign turns of expression show points of contact now with one now with others of the post-Pauline writings. With Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles this work coincides in the perversion of the meaning and importance of Faith, as St Paul uses the word. Like Ephesians, it ascribes to Christ a position of authority and functions which St Paul had still reserved for God. Thus where the

epistle copies from 1 Thessalonians it shows a disposition to replace the word "God" by "The Lord" (*cf.* ii. 13 with 1 Thess. i. 4; iii. 16 with 1 Thess. v. 23; iii. 5 with 1 Thess. v. 24; *cf.* also ii. 16 with 1 Thess. iii. 11). Indeed, in i. 12 Christ is most probably called God. Like the Pastoral Epistles, our epistle is sterner than St Paul in its judgments. The Apostle himself could not have written the verses i. 6, 8; ii. 11; iii. 6, 14. Remarks like those of i. 5, 7, already lie on the way to the later conception that martyrdom in itself creates a right to future glory. Above all, however, the single original contribution of our epistle—the passage ii. 1–12, that in its construction reminds us of the so-called apocalypses (an example of which, the Revelation of St John, is preserved in the New Testament)—cannot in its details be brought into harmony with St Paul's occasional prophecies of the future, nor does it in its whole tone, in the bold definiteness of its forecasts, agree with the much more

reserved language of St Paul. The historical presuppositions of the epistle also involve difficulties. According to ii. 2, a letter falsely ascribed to St Paul seems to have arrived at Thessalonica at a time when St Paul himself probably first began to write and when his epistles were certainly not yet regarded as authoritative. The Paul of our epistle accordingly finds it necessary to guard against such forgeries by affixing his own autograph (iii. 17)—a truly mechanical proceeding for one who could impress the stamp of his spirit upon every word he used, and might surely have given his converts credit for some feeling for his inimitable style; and, moreover, a sufficiently useless safeguard since it was certainly easier to imitate the handwriting than the thoughts of the Tent-maker. Again, no trace is found here of the fervent yearning to see the Thessalonians expressed throughout the first epistle, although, according to ii. 5, the Apostle had not visited Thessalonica since his first letter which is referred to in ii. 15.

Nor does St Paul's lively interest in the affairs of the Thessalonian Church make itself felt in our epistle. Apart from the references to increasing persecutions (i. 4 *ff.*) and to doubts concerning the Second Coming of Christ (ii. 1 *ff.*), two phenomena which were probably connected with one another, intimations only of the most general description are given concerning the state of affairs in the community.

The majority of these difficulties are at the same time sure indications of a later date. These indications are reinforced by others. If disturbers of the peace of the Church allege that they are endued with the Apostle's spirit and appeal to the authority of his own written teaching, the conception of the nature of apostleship implied by such proceedings is quite impossible at the time of the beginning of the Pauline mission and can only harmonise with the conceptions and opinions of a later generation as represented in Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles. The author himself stands upon the same footing as those false

teachers; therefore the Paul of this epistle professes only to repeat what he has said before. This Paul ever appeals to himself. Like the Paul of the Pastoral Epistles he binds his readers to a tradition (ii. 15; *cf.* also iii. 6) such as could not have existed in St Paul's life-time, which, however, in the following generation was conjured up whenever need arose. Finally, a small trait, which does not fit in well with the character of the real St Paul, namely, the forcing his own person into the picture of the heavenly rest reserved for the readers (i. 7), is seen in a very attractive light if the Apostle himself was then in fruition of the rest which they thereafter would share with him.

Though all these things point to the conclusion that this short letter was first written after the death of St Paul, yet it affords us no clear indications by which we can fix its date more exactly. Its many points of contact with the Book of Revelation, in which it strangely surpasses

all the other epistles of St Paul, suggest at least the latest period of Domitian's reign. For certainly the dependence lies not on the side of that most original work but on the side of our short letter—an opinion which is supported by the fact that where the subject of the two writings is the same the ideas of our epistle belong to a more developed stage. Also, the persistent persecutions which are presupposed in i. 4 *ff.* point to the time of the Book of Revelation and of 1 Pet. iv. 17. The expressions and ideas of i. 12 even remind us of St John xvii. 10, xx. 28. On the other hand the expression "Temple of God" (ii. 4), occurring in a common apocalyptic figure which is derived from the Book of Daniel, proves nothing, the less so since St Paul himself had called the Christian community a Temple of God. The aim also of the epistle betrays a fairly late date. It is intended to confirm the wavering faith of those who were perplexed by the continuous postponement of the

Second Coming of Christ, and at the same time to soothe a too impatient and excited feeling of expectancy which, according to ii. 2, had been stirred up by many who appealed to the authority of St Paul. In a passage which may be purposely obscure, of which we in these days at least can give no certain interpretation, the cause of this delay is stated. Doubts of this kind are first combated in the very late Second Epistle of St Peter. If the interpretation of the details of prophecy of the future given in ii. 1–12 were somewhat more certain, we should gain therefrom information that would enable us to ascertain more accurately the date of our epistle. As it is, there is no reason of any kind for fixing it later than the time of Domitian.

It is not difficult to understand why our author calls St Paul above all others to his aid, and is more especially dependent upon his Epistle to the Thessalonians. In the first place, the disturbing party had appealed to the authority of St Paul. Again, the only written

documents of the first generation dealing with the Second Coming proceeded from his pen. It seemed therefore best to represent the Apostle as interpreting and correcting his own utterances. Moreover, the Epistle to the Thessalonians among all the epistles of St Paul contained the very exhortations which now seemed necessary, and was also the only epistle which gave detailed information concerning the Second Coming. It was besides less well known than the great epistles.

The acceptance of our epistle by Christendom without, so far as we know, a trace of objection, is easily explained by the fact that its contents satisfied a pressing need of the times. Now that two generations had already past since the death of our Lord, it served on the one hand to explain the delay in the Second Coming which threatened to overthrow the faith of many in the whole conception, and on the other hand it served to calm the minds of those who under the stress of persecution were looking forward to the

Coming of the Lord with an expectation that was only the more excited and intense because of continual disappointment; and yet while performing both these functions it preserved the hope itself bright and clear. Such an epistle only serves to mark a stage in the gradual ebb of the enthusiasm with which early Christians looked forward to the Second Coming, and as an example of the way in which they accommodated themselves to the course of events.

## IV

## THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE

We now approach a group of writings which are much more closely related to one another than those of the post-Pauline group, which are indeed so nearly homogeneous that tradition itself has comprehended them under the name of one author—St John. While the Epistle to the Hebrews, the First Epistle of St Peter, the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the Acts of the Apostles are only allied in spirit, the writings of this group stand to one another as it were in blood relationship. The former writings are like scattered isolated ruins from which the excavators of the city of Primitive Christianity can reconstruct for themselves the style of the buildings and the line of the streets in the parts of the city

built by the second generation; in the latter group we as it were come upon ruins, in better preservation and still lying in position, which bring before our eyes some quarter of the city in all its completeness and peculiar character. It occupies the loftiest eminence in the district—thitherward converge all those streets whose traces are still discernible. We have indeed before us the remains of what was once a glorious temple. We cannot decide at first glance whether in all its parts it was the work of the same architect, we can only perceive that however various the buildings and however different the material used in them they nevertheless all belong to the same school of architecture.

But in spite of this strongly-marked and distinctive character, the circle of Christendom whence sprang the Johannine literature shows a marvellous combination of original creative power with many-sided receptivity. Though its creations are marvellously different in character, yet each is in its way quite

unique. The two small epistles known in the New Testament as the second and third epistles of St John are alone somewhat analogous to the epistles of St Paul to Philemon, Timothy, and Titus, in so far as we are still able to distinguish the two last under the accretions of later days. The so-called First Epistle of St John may be best compared to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and like it lacks an address. But while in the latter we see the epistle passing over into the style of a sermon, in the former the epistolary character is entirely absent. The two most characteristic and important productions of this circle, the Revelation and the Gospel, have no parallels in the literature of primitive Christianity. The Revelation introduces into Christian literature a characteristic type of contemporary Jewish literature. In the Gospel, Greek literary forms combine with the typical forms of Christian Gospel literature to produce a creation of unique character. The many-sidedness of this circle of Christendom is still

more clearly shown by the fact that while the Book of Revelation is pervaded by the spirit of Palestine, the Alexandrian point of view is prominent in the Gospel. And yet both writings share essentially the same conception of Christianity.

We may infer that it is by no mere accident that the writings of this school have experienced many alterations in their text. The two most important later interpolations in writings of the New Testament are found in the Gospel and in the First Epistle of St John, namely, the Adulteress section of St John (vii. 53–viii. 11) and the Three Witnesses of 1 St John v. 8. To this number may be added the embellishment of the text of St John v. 4 and a striking number of very early conflicting readings. But even before the reception of these writings into the Canon the Gospel had been amplified by an appendix (chap. xxi.), to which verses 24 *f.* were probably added at a later time, while the Book of Revelation had suffered a slight revision at the hands

of an editor who added the introduction (i. 1–3) and the conclusion (xx. 18–21), in which he sought to guard the book from further changes. Again, 1 John v. 14–21 also gives the impression of an appendix. May we be allowed to make the same suggestion in the case of the famous prologue to the Gospel (i. 1–18) which stands in such contrast to the rest of that work? These writings must therefore have been regarded as a kind of common property by the circle whence they sprang.

### 1. The Book of Revelation.

A late offshoot of the ancient prophetic literature of Israel—a spiritual movement whose first beginnings go back to the time of the Exile (Ezekiel—about 580 B.C.), which however under the Syrian tyranny took fresh root in the Book of Daniel (164 B.C.)—has in this book been transplanted into the fertile soil of Christianity. The name of

the book describes the characteristics of the type of literature it represents. This so-called apocalyptic literature professes to proclaim revelations which have been vouchsafed as visions to the writer while in a state of ecstasy. These visions, however, do not reflect abiding truths but coming events of history; hence the writer generally takes his stand in a time more or less remote in order that he may thus view events which are already past as still lying in the future. He also manifests the deficient self-confidence of a secondary generation by clothing himself in the prophet's mantle of one of the revered forms of a grander period. The symbolic imagery under which he sees these events is of the most varied origin; many of the symbols belong to the most primitive creations of the religious fancy which have survived ages of national catastrophe and social revolution and have been handed on in varied form as patriarchal heirlooms to later generations. They appear again and again

in the works of writers of the most different character, though often with different significations. Many traits of these symbols belong to a fixed traditional form. The seer notes them in his vision without connecting with them any definite meaning. Again a later writer often borrows whole groups of imagery from a predecessor without troubling himself in the least about their significance.

These writings often seem to reveal to us a spirit of powerlessness and perplexity in the face of the future—a spirit which despairingly and convulsively clings to fantastic hopes as the continuation of a great past as fantastically conceived. We seem often to hear in them the shrill and bitter cry of one who has lost faith in all earthly things, even in himself. And yet they are all inspired by a courageous faith that God does ever by His secret counsel guide the universe towards a wondrous consummation—a faith deep and sincere though it has not power to bring God, who is enthroned in highest

heaven and abides in immutable quiescence far removed from the things of time, into touch with earthly things, and hence must postulate a motley host of heavenly beings as the agents of His Providence. But the apocalyptic writer has nevertheless come into personal touch with the Eternal. This it is which lends to his piety that inward life and warmth which distinguish it from the formal, cold, calculating legality into which the piety of those centuries threatened to crystallise. In the lava stream of Apocalypse there still glows the fire from the deep.

The strong social convulsions which recurred with ever-increasing suddenness and violence during the last two centuries of Jewish national life were almost always accompanied by eruptions of apocalyptic literature. These writings prepared the ground for the Christian religion. The Baptist himself belongs in spirit to the apocalyptic school, though he never took pen in hand and ever held aloof from the formal imagery and wild fancy of the ordinary

Apocalypse. Indeed, our Lord's proclamation of the coming kingdom and His demand that men should repent and believe in the good news are in closer relationship to this spiritual tendency than to any other among the Jewish people. St Paul is more of a Pharisee and Rabbi; and yet the apocalyptic mood was not foreign to one who experienced revelations in which he knew not whether he was in or out of the body (2 Cor. xii. 1 *ff.*), who proclaims mysteries (1 Cor. xv. 51; Rom. xi. 25), and uses the imagery which we meet with in 1 Thess. iv. 15–17 and 1 Cor. xv. 23–28. Passages of apocalyptic origin have even crept into the compilation of sayings of our Lord in the Gospels—for instance St Mark xiii. 7–8, 14–27, and probably other passages here and there. The group of writings including Hebrews, 1 Peter, Ephesians, and the Acts is practically free from apocalyptic influence, and yet even here we come across a slight trace in such passages as Hebrews xii. 22–27; 1 Peter iii. 19, 22; Ephes. vi. 12 *f.*,

i. 9 *f.*, iii. 3. On the other hand the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, in ii. 1–12—the only section which is not derived from 1 Thessalonians—the Epistle of St Jude, and the Second Epistle of St Peter are all full of the apocalyptic spirit. Indeed, in the first and last at least of these three late epistles the great apostles of the past are represented, in true apocalyptic fashion, as revealing mysteries with a view to the solution of the problems that faced a later generation.

But the Christians were also acquainted with Jewish apocalypses. According to Origen, 1 Cor. ii. 9 comes from the Apocalypse of Elijah and likewise 2 Tim. iii. 8 from another apocalypse. In St Jude 9, 14, apocalypses are quoted. Papias (about 150) even quotes a passage from the Apocalypse of Baruch as a saying of our Lord. In later days Jewish apocalypses were edited in a more or less Christian sense. Indeed, Christians themselves produced apocalypses—such as the Apocalypse of St Peter, which was written probably in the

East at a much later date; also the Roman work "The Shepherd of Hermas," which is however somewhat distinct in character from the ordinary apocalypse; and above all our Book of the Revelation of St John.

This Christian Apocalypse manifests in a specially distinct form the common characteristics of all apocalypses—that artificial intermingling of imagery from the most different sources, that want of continuity which prevents all comprehension of the work as a consistent whole and renders whole passages absolutely unintelligible in the situation presupposed by their context. In contrast to an ordinary dwelling-house built according to a definite plan and in one consistent style, this book may be compared to some castle which for centuries has gradually extended itself as the formation of the ground and the existing buildings allowed, where tower crowds upon tower, courtyard succeeds courtyard, gable rises above gable in quaint confusion, where passages run up and down, in and out, so that one can

scarcely find one's way, with here and there niches in the half-light where upon the walls appear pictures dim with age, often grotesque, often gloomy, concerning many of which none can tell whom they represent. Sometimes the forms are gentle and attractive, sometimes they are stern and terrible.

If we read, for example, the letters to the Seven Churches in chaps. ii.–iii. and then chaps. xii.–xiii., we feel ourselves in two different worlds were it not that over them both stretches the same bright heaven. The forms, the imagery, the interests, the tendencies are different in each case. Here blazes the flame of fanaticism—there breathe soft and gentle breezes. Here all seems so strange, so Oriental—there so familiar, so Western, if we may use the word. It was long before scholars discovered the solution of this enigma. We now know that the Christian author of this book has not only derived from Judaism his literary form, his fantastic imagery, and his peculiar tendency, but that he has even in-

corporated into his work a Jewish writing, a Jewish Apocalypse. Accordingly this book is the first instance of a later phenomenon which, as we have said, constantly repeated itself in later days. Very diverse opinions still exist as to the unity and extent of the Jewish portions of the Book of Revelation, but their actual presence is beyond dispute. For instance in chap. xii. the birth of the Messiah, which for Christians lay in the past, is proclaimed as a promise. Of course a Jewish Apocalypse could not be accepted into a book written for Christians without occasional alterations in text, but if this be once admitted then there is no more difficulty in perceiving that the main portion of the book, from chap. viii. on towards the end, is a Jewish work in which here and there Christian light and shade is worked into the Jewish pictures. And in this procedure the Christian editor has employed quite simple expedients which he for the most part uses again and again. Thus from his repertory of Christian symbolism he inserts "the Lamb"

for Christ wherever Christian ideas demanded it. No defect in the picture ever results from the removal of this term and its corresponding idea. One need only make an experiment with xii. 11, xiii. 8, xiv. 10, xv. 3, xvii. 14. Often indeed its insertion creates monstrosities that are intolerable even in the case of apocalyptic fantasy: such are "The Marriage of the Lamb" (xix. 7), "The Bride—the Wife of the Lamb" (xxi. 9), "The Book of Life of the Lamb" (xiii. 8, xxi. 27; in xiii. 8 it might seem that in the present text the words "from the beginning of the world" are to be joined with the word "slain"), "The Glory of God did lighten it (the heavenly Jerusalem) and the lamp thereof is the Lamb" (xxi. 23; *cf.* xxii. 5). Religious custom which has endeared such phrases to us has often hidden from us their inward impossibility. But still more often it is quite obvious to us that the idea of the Lamb is interpolated into a passage; thus in xii. 22, "The Lord God, the Almighty is their temple and the Lamb";

in xxi. 3, "The Throne of God and of the Lamb." One who is Almighty can be pictured as a Temple, but not so a lamb; a throne befits the idea of God but not the idea of a lamb.

Similarly the name Christ is occasionally inserted; thus in xi. 15, where a Christian would never have applied to God the term "our Lord"—the favourite title for Christ and that too in close connection with the words "His Christ"; and again the singular number in the following words "and He shall reign," shows that two rulers of the kingdom had not been before mentioned. The idea that is here interpolated comes from xii. 10, where it is consistent with the context as also in xx. 4. Moreover, the name "Word of God" (xix. 13) evidently does not belong to the original form of the passage in which it occurs; for according to verse 12 no one knows the name, and if the prophet had intended to interpret it he would not have inserted a description of the clothing between

the interpretation of the name and his description of the diadems bearing the name. Similar anomalies accompany two occurrences of the word "Apostles." On the first occasion (xviii. 20) "the Apostles" can well be omitted between "the Saints" and "the Prophets," seeing that in other places (xi. 18, xvi. 6, xviii. 24) "Saints and Prophets" is shown to be a fixed formula, while in Ephes. ii. 20 "Apostles and Prophets" is shown to have been a Christian formula. On the second occasion (xxi. 14) they spoil the metaphor. If the gates or the angels at them are inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, then the foundations of the walls that unite them cannot bear the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. We note moreover that these foundations are described afterwards and that a separate precious stone is assigned to each of them. Again in chaps. viii.–xxii. we often meet with a formula which has probably been inserted by the Christian editor, in order to Christianise his work. It

occurs in i. 9 and vi. 9, where the Christians are said to suffer "for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus." It stands in the reverse order in xx. 4, where it has not in the least been prepared for by chaps. xiii.–xix., and where if omitted it would not be missed. But it is possible that this phrase may have been based upon the vocabulary of the Jewish Apocalypse, if indeed the words of xii. 11 "for the word of their testimony" belong to this writing. (*Cf.* however our remarks later.) Likewise in xix. 10 the phrase "the testimony" is found, here only with the epithet "of Jesus," although it does not appear in the exactly similar passage xxii. 9. It seems that "the testimony" belonged to the original Jewish Apocalypse, while the note which follows and expounds the idea that has been now altered by the addition of the epithet belongs, together with the epithet, to the Christian editor. This view is supported by xi. 7. We cannot decide for certain whether in xii. 17 and xiv. 12 the whole phrase "which

keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony (the faith) of Jesus," or only the second clause, is to be assigned to the Christian editor. The first clause is shown by 1 John iii. 24 and v. 2 *f.* to belong to the Johannine vocabulary, but it may also have been derived from the Jewish Apocalypse. We may, however, be quite certain that the words of xvii. 6 "and of the blood of the witnesses of Jesus" are an interpolation due to the Christian editor, for the reference to Jesus is absolutely foreign to the whole context.

Beside these isolated phrases whose interpolation gives a different significance to the whole scene, we find only very few passages where Christian thoughts or conceptions surprise us by their appearance in a world of alien ideas. In the first place, xvii. 14 is certainly not original in its present context. The anticipation of the great title which is introduced with such solemnity in xix. 16, is as improbable as its application to a lamb is

unnatural; and the announcement of a victorious conflict of this Lamb with the Beast spoils by anticipation the grand effect of the scene depicted in xix. 11. As in xii. 11, the Christians are represented as having a share in the victory. But xii. 11 is without doubt a Christian interpolation, since the idea of a victory won by the Christians is quite foreign to the context, while the expression "the blood of the Lamb" appears elsewhere only in vii. 14, and the words "they loved not their life even unto death" remind us of St John xii. 25 and Rev. ii. 10. Next it is a question whether the whole section xiv. 1–5, which is out of harmony with its context, does not belong to the Christian editor. However, the Jewish Apocalypse just here is itself only a mosaic of passages very loosely connected together. If xiv. 1–5 belonged to the original Jewish source, then in verse 1 "a lamb" must be read for "the Lamb," and what follows must be read in an abbreviated form—"which have a name written on their

foreheads" corresponding to xix. 12; and in verse 4 we must delete "and unto the Lamb" at the end, and also the words "these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," which as they stand come too early in the passage. Then this section might well be the original source of the metaphor of "the Lamb" which dominates the imagination of the Christian editor.

The remaining passages of a Christian tendency in chaps. viii.–xii. probably belong not to this first Christian editor but to a final editor, who gave its present form to the original Revelation of St John which began with i. 4 and included the Jewish Apocalypse. That the book received such a final revision before it attained wide publicity cannot be doubted. As shown above (pp. 337 *f.*), this revision can be traced at the beginning and end of the book. In i. 1–3 this final editor gives the book an amplified title, and invokes upon the readers a blessing which appears to be imitated from the concluding section (xx. 7)

of the book he is editing. At the end he attaches a warning (xxv. 18 *f.*) in which he betrays what he himself has done, though he knew that he was justified in doing it—the warning against any alteration, whether by addition or subtraction, in the form he had given to the book. In verse 20 he therefore repeats the concluding knell of verses 7 and 12, and removes to the end the final greeting (21) which probably belonged to the original Apocalypse, corresponding as it does to i. 4–6, and indeed closely agreeing with the greeting of Hebrews xiii. 25. On the other hand the verses from xxii. 11, or at least from verse 14 onwards, may be ejaculations and words of warning attached to the work by owners or readers of the book which the editor shrank from deleting. For verses 14 *f.* only emphasise once again impressive phrases from vii. 14; xxii. 2; xxi. 12 *f.*, 27, 8; verse 16*a* is a generalisation of xxi. 6 connecting with i. 1, and emphasising the Seven Epistles of chaps. ii.–iii. (here regarded as addressed to

the readers) as the most important part of the book; verse 16*b* is a reminiscence of v. 5, ii. 28; verse 17 of xiv. 13, xxi. 9, 6, St John vii. 37. Verses 12–13 may likewise be only a collection of marginal notes, verse 12 derived from xxii. 7, iii. 11, ii. 23 (*cf.* Isaiah xl. 10), and verse 13 from xxi. 6, i. 17, ii. 8. And moreover, the strange exhortation of verse 11, which would seem to be in a more intelligible position after verse 12, may also have originated in some reader who had Daniel xii. 10 in his mind.

These, however, are questions which do not affect the character of the book as a whole. On the other hand, the possibility that the editor who has attached the preface and conclusion to the Book of Revelation may also have interpolated passages in the text of the book, is a matter of serious importance. Nor can there be any doubt that he has done so. We discover his hand most clearly in short notes, explaining expressions whose significance he thinks the readers would not under-

stand, which in many cases are not accommodated to the grammatical construction of the whole passage. Such are:—the explanatory notes v. 6, 8; xxi. 8, which are inserted in the form of a relative clause; probably also the note of xx. 14 introduced by the words "this is"; the qualifying clause in the nominative case "which cometh down from Heaven from my God" (iii. 12 from xxi. 2); "the old serpent (xx. 2 from xii. 9) which is the devil and Satan" (both these terms, which were in use among early Christians, have also probably been inserted by this editor in xii. 9); the notes of xix. 8, 10, and perhaps also of ix. 19, which are introduced by the word "for"; the gloss in xi. 8, "where also their Lord was crucified"; and perhaps also the explanation of the Tabernacle in xiii. 6. Moreover, some other notices tending to edification give rise to the impression that they have been added by a reader who was probably the final editor. Again in xxi. 5–6, "And he that sat upon the throne said: See, I make all things new," and "And he

said: They are come to pass," two sentences which sound the solemn knell of a departing world, are separated from one another by a clause which seems derived from xix. 9. Also xiii. 9 *f.* breaks the context and seems to be a note addressed to the Christian reader, like xxii. 11. The exclamation at the end of verse 10, "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints," may be derived from xiv. 12; while the addition of "faith" in the former passage may have given occasion in xiv. 12 to the substitution of "faith" for "testimony" in the characteristic phrase of the author of the Christian Apocalypse, which is here shown by its nominatival construction to be a marginal note of the final editor. Further, some beatitudes which perhaps have their original in xix. 9 and xxii. 7 are suspicious seeing that they disturb the context; such are:—xvi. 15, where the beatitude is besides introduced by a reminiscence of iii. 3, which echoes of a saying of our Lord (St Luke xii. 39); so also xx. 6, and perhaps xiv. 13. Finally, the

collection of passages from St Matt. xxiv. 30, Rev. xxii. 13, i. 4, and iv. 8, which appears at i. 7 *f.* and is out of connection there, would seem to have been originally a marginal note. Some of these interpolations, so far as they are found in chaps. viii.–xxii., may not be due to the final editor, but may have been already inserted by the author of the Christian Apocalypse. This is a matter that can scarcely be definitely settled, nor does its decision affect the main question.

If we now delete these insignificant items we have in viii. 1–xxii. 5 an apocalypse in no point distinct from other Jewish apocalypses, and showing in its construction and in its whole material absolutely no trace of characteristically Christian ideas. Whether this Apocalypse already existed as a whole when it was incorporated into the work of John, the author of the Christian Apocalypse, is a matter of indifference. This is, however, the simplest hypothesis, nor can any weighty objection be brought against it. Naturally this

Apocalypse, like others of its kind, is not an homogeneous work but is composed of all manner of traditional apocalyptic material. Nevertheless we trace in it a distinct development of events; and the compilation of such a book consisting of passages of the most varied origin, to the exclusion of any considerable Christian element, is only probable as the work of a Jewish author—indeed, it is scarcely intelligible as the work of a Christian.

But though it is certain that chaps. viii.–xxii. were originally a Jewish production which has been edited in many parts in a Christian sense, still the Christian author by incorporating this writing into the literature of Christendom and by leaving much in it unchanged, has declared his belief in its main substance. Hence a sketch of this Jewish Apocalypse comes within the province of the historian of Primitive Christian Literature. We must leave out of account the question whether the beginning of this Apocalypse has come down to us un-

altered. The section vii. 1–12 at all events belongs to it, for the scenes describing the opening of the seals were evidently composed by the Christian author (John) to form a transition from his own work to the incorporated Jewish work, and the idea of the sealing of the 144,000 does not harmonise well with that of the unsealing of the book; and besides, the whole thought of the section is Jewish. Moreover, seeing that the introductory scene of this section is in close connection with the tremendous convulsions of nature depicted in vi. 12–17, we may conjecture that all that John introduces in connection with the opening of the sixth seal was the overture to the Jewish Apocalypse. It is in favour of this view that vivid descriptions of convulsions in the realm of nature, such as those of vi. 12–17, which are practically made up of quotations from the prophets, are a very favourite ingredient of Jewish apocalpytic literature. Of course here also "the Lamb" of verses 9 and 10, as verse 12 clearly shows, must be

deleted as an interpolation of John the Christian author; while verses 13–17 are his Christian interpretation of the initial vision, and viii. 1 is interpolated by him, again serving to unite his work with the Jewish writing. Accordingly we find that these mighty convulsions in the world of nature and the sealing of the Israelites who are to be saved out of all lands, form the prelude to this Jewish apocalyptic drama which opens with seven trumpet-blasts. The colourless events, taken from the traditional repertory of apocalyptic literature which accompany the first four blasts (viii. 6–13), only form the introduction, as is shown by the three woes of the flying eagle (viii. 13), which prepare for the three following blasts. The fifth and sixth blasts then announce a savage host with Apollyon the destroyer as their leader, in which the Parthians are probably depicted (ix. 1–12), and an allied army of ghastly spirits (ix. 13–21) whose fearful ravages have no effect in turning Rome from idolatry and from all manner of

wickedness. Just as the last three blasts were prepared for by the scene of the flying eagle (viii. 13), so now the yet more solemn scene of the book that is devoured (x. 1–11) leads up to the climax of the last trumpet-blast. But first comes the scene of the two witnesses (xi. 1–14), again evidently a piece by itself that has only been inserted here by the author of the Apocalypse. Now at last, with the seventh blast (xi. 15), begins the Messianic epoch solemnly proclaimed by the hymns of verses 15 and 17 *f.* and by the appearance of the Ark of the Covenant (19). The first act comprises the birth of Messiah and His persecution by the devil, who has been driven from heaven (xii. 1–17), and by the Roman Empire together with all the powers of heathendom, to which the devil has committed his authority (xiii. 1–18). If xiv. 1–5 belongs to the Jewish Apocalypse, then Messiah now appears upon Mount Zion in likeness of a Lamb (in contrast to the beast which personifies the Roman Empire), and round

Him are gathered the 144,000 who have been sealed. The second act deals with the judgment upon Rome (here named Babylon), which is announced in xiv. 6–13. This judgment is consummated by means of the outpouring of seven vials of wrath (xv. 1), and is introduced by the hymn of the victors (xv. 2–4), which forms as it were an anticipatory overture. The first four vials again introduce the formal terrors of the ordinary apocalypse (xv. 5–xvi. 9). With the fifth, however, darkness settles down upon the impenitent throne of Rome (xvi. 10 *f.*). With the sixth the kings of the East approach from the Euphrates (xvi. 12). Rome summons the whole world to her side against them (xvi. 13 *f.*). The battlefield where the opposing armies meet is called Harmagedon (xvi. 16). With the outpouring of the seventh vial the cities of the heathen fall and Rome is divided into three parts (xvi. 17–21 ; probably an allusion to the three opposing emperors Galba, Otho, and Vitellius). And now the storm of judgment

breaks over Rome (xvii. 1–xix. 10). The beast, without doubt Nero (xvii. 13, 17), in alliance with the ten kings of the East (xvii. 12), completes the work of destruction. Whilst the world is filled with mourning (xviii. 9–19) the Jews now rejoice in the day of vengeance upon their cruel enemies (xviii. 1–8, 20; xix. 2). That the overthrow is final is shown by the curse (xviii. 21–24) and the hymn of triumph (xix. 1–8). The establishment of the Messianic kingdom now forms the third act, which is announced by the Hallelujah (xix. 6–8) and the scene 9–10. From the opened heavens appears the King of kings and Lord of lords riding upon a white horse, with the armies of heaven (xix. 11–16) to destroy the victors (17–21). Now Satan also is bound (xx. 1–3). For a thousand years the faithful reign with Messiah over the earth (4–6); then comes the last decisive conflict with Satan, who has been released, and with the confederate nations Gog and Magog whom he has called to his aid from the ends of the earth.

It ends with their destruction and Satan's everlasting imprisonment in the lake of fire (xx. 7–10). Now the dead are raised and the judgment is set (11–15). And the great drama closes with the renewal of the world (xxi. 1–5) which has its centre in the new Jerusalem (xxi. 9–xxii. 5).

It is a noble drama that we have before us, one which, in spite of the fixed traditional form of much of its material, shows wonderful consistency in its development. It is indeed the most precious jewel in the glittering necklace of Jewish apocalypses.

No trait in its imagery leads us beyond the narrow horizon of Jerusalem or the year of the destruction of that city by Titus. The tone is one of the bitterest despair which has lost all hope in human power and looks for help only from the powers of the world above. Nero with the Parthians must overthrow Rome, then Messiah will destroy him. The Jews must meanwhile wait and pray with patience and allow themselves to be slaughtered. The

date of the book can be exactly determined. According to chap. xi. the city of Jerusalem is in the hands of the foe; but the Temple still holds out and the author is sure that it will not fall. This Apocalypse was therefore written between May and August of the year 70 A.D.

Twenty years later the Christians, those at least of the province of Asia, found themselves in a very similar situation. They were devoted to destruction unless they joined in worship of the Emperor. The deadly foe is again the Roman Empire and its head, this time Domitian. Christ their Lord delays His Coming. The yearning prayer "Come Lord Jesus" runs through their ranks. "See I come quickly" sounds the answer to their faith. What light must have been thrown upon this situation by the Apocalypse which once sought to bring consolation to the Jews during the terrible summer months of the year 70 A.D.! Surely all those fervent and daring hopes which had not then been realised must

now be fulfilled. So long as their fulfilment was delayed the book was like an unexecuted testament sealed with seven seals. It now falls into the hands of a Christian named John; now the seven seals are about to be broken. In the signs of the times he sees as it were the breaking of the seals—that is, the approaching fulfilment of the apocalyptic vision. Of course this vision must be rightly understood. It is concerned not with the Jews but with the Christians, the true heirs of the promise; indeed, in their obstinate persecution of the Christians the Jews have hitherto shown themselves to be a Synagogue of Satan (ii. 9, iii. 9).

And now this John, whose devoted adherence to the faith of Jesus has involved him in banishment to Patmos (i. 9), is himself rapt away by the apocalyptic spirit. He himself receives similar revelations to confirm him in the right understanding of that Apocalypse and in the certainty that its prophecies would reach fulfilment. He dedicates his whole

work to the churches of the seven cities of the province of Asia (i. 4–6). This dedication broadens out into seven earnest faithful letters to these churches which clearly reflect the peculiar conditions of each (ii. 1–iii. 22), and which his Lord as it were dictates to him in a glorious vision which he experiences one Sunday (i. 9–20). Then a new vision (iv. 1–11) forms the transition to the scene of the unsealing of the Apocalypse (v. 1–14). The breaking of the first four seals introduces in each case only ordinary apocalyptic occurrences pictured in the well-known scenes of the four horsemen (vi. 1–8)—like the first four trumpet-blasts and vials in the Jewish Apocalypse. With the breaking of the fifth seal the martyrs that have been slain receive white robes, and are comforted by being told that they need only rest yet a little time before their number should be fulfilled (vi. 9–11). And now—if our former attempt to discover the beginning of the Jewish Apocalypse is correct—with the breaking of the sixth seal the introductory vision of that

Apocalypse opens before us (vi. 12–vii. 12). One of the elders of chap. iv. gives John its right interpretation. At the breaking of the seventh seal there is at first a long silence (viii. 1); then the drama of the Jewish Apocalypse opens with the seven trumpet-blasts. When this is brought to its conclusion at xxii. 5, there follows a strong affirmation that all is true and must shortly come to pass: "Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book" (xxii. 6 *f.*). Then John yet again appears before his readers and relates—still keeping to the simile of the sealing of the Jewish Apocalypse—that it had been told him "Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand" (8–10). Whether in the following verses this or that trait, and also most probably verse 21, belongs to John, or whether all belongs to the final editor, is a question which, as we have shown above, must be left open.

Thus Christendom came by its Apocalypse and therewith entered upon the inheritance of

a tangled mass of Jewish fantasies, which ever lure the imagination into an unsubstantial cloudland—a confused medley of symbolism glowing through and through with the hot colours of human passion, though somewhat softened under the brush of the Christian artists who appropriated it, which in spite of all that is bizarre is happily not wanting in a certain trait of grandeur. But therewith Christendom also entered upon the possession of symbolic pictures of the aims of all human yearning and endeavour, of refined and etherialised beauty, such as piety purified in the furnace of affliction can alone create, which have ever shone and do still shine like the stars in heaven to guide the faithful in their earthly pilgrimage towards eternity. These Jewish fantasies impelled a Christian of wonderful power and purity of imagination to creations no less noble, which in refined taste and sense of harmony are far superior to the Jewish work which gave the impetus to their production. Indeed the epistles to

the Seven Churches—in spite of an admixture of apocalyptic symbols which just here are somewhat awkwardly inserted, and leaving quite out of account their importance as original authorities for the history of the churches of Asia Minor in the last decade of the first century—in their combination of ethical austerity with real tenderness and warmth of religious feeling are worthy to be regarded as among the most precious records of primitive Christian faith and aspiration afforded us in the New Testament. Moreover, these Jewish visions of mighty events in the sphere of universal history, which were adopted by the Christians just when they were suffering under the cruel pressure of persecution at the hands of the great world and its ruling powers, strengthened and brought into clearer consciousness among them the disposition to consider their relation to their social environment—a disposition which is manifested in the other documents of the period of Domitian that we have already

discussed. They were thus taught to think historically and to bring their society into connection with the great movements of universal history. They were thus prepared to take part in that history, though indeed with aims that in many points originated in the Jewish rather than in the Christian religion. Finally, through the influence of this book, a gift from Judaism, the gaze of Christians, which in the development of the Gospel literature had been firmly fixed upon the mighty past, ever again turned with yearning towards the future; and thus hope, the very life-breath of all and especially of Christian piety, was strengthened within them.

Let us here conclude with a brief note concerning the points in which the Jewish part of our work is sharply distinguished from that belonging to John the Christian author. (1) Quotations from the Old Testament in the Johannine portion are constantly made according to the Septuagint, while in the Jewish por-

tion the Hebrew Text is taken into account. (2) The Johannine sections give evidence of tolerable literary skill—except the Address (i. 4–6), which is evidently written purposely in a somewhat disjointed style—while the Jewish sections are full of Aramaisms and grammatical blunders. (3) In the Johannine sections universalism is a matter of course (v. 9 *ff.*, vii. 13 *ff.*); the other sections are exclusively Jewish. (4) The former are bitter only against Jews, the latter are full of fury but only against the Gentiles. (5) The former speak of Jesus, the latter only of Christ. (6) In the Johannine part Jesus, in the Jewish part God is the Judge. (7) In the former the Gentiles are saved, in the latter they are judged. (8) In the latter Messiah is a war lord girt with the sword, in the former He is a lamb. (9) In the latter He saves by slaughter, in the former by His own death. (10) In the latter the symbolism is taken from the Temple and its services, in the former from the worship of the Christian churches. (11) The Johannine part

has few, while the Jewish part has abundant points of contact with other Jewish apocalypses. (12) In the Johannine part acquaintance with St Paul can be constantly traced, but never in the Jewish part.

## 2. The Second and Third Epistles of St John.

The two small Epistles which tradition assigns to St John, whose style indeed marks them as belonging to the Johannine school, were written, as the address shows, by a man who was known under the name of "the Elder." Their similarity is very striking. In the address of each the recipient is assured that the Elder "loves him (her) in truth"; both begin with the statement that the writer rejoices greatly in his friend's walk in the truth; while at the end of both, just before the concluding greetings and with very slight verbal variation, we read that the author had yet many things to write, but would not write

them with pen and ink since he hoped to come himself shortly and to speak face to face. This is more strange in that as regards the rest of their content, which deals with very concrete questions, these letters are sharply distinct from one another. One is directed to a Church and all its members under the name of "an elect lady and her children," the other is a purely personal letter to a certain Gaius; hence in the first letter the address is long and solemn in tone, while in the second letter it is short and concise. The one speaks in quite general terms of the duties of the community, the other deals exclusively with the conduct of particular personages mentioned by name. Nevertheless, the aim which impelled the Elder to write is fundamentally the same in both cases. In the general epistle the occasion of its writing is clearly expressed. False teachers have arisen who confess not Jesus as Christ come in the flesh (7–9). The Elder therefore desires that the Church should not receive such men, should not even greet

them (10 *f.*). The epistle to Gaius assures the recipient that he does well in showing hospitality to the brethren and setting them forward on their journey, seeing that they journeyed "for the sake of the Name." The writer states that he has also written a letter to the Church (9). However a certain Diotrephes, who wishes to keep for himself the pre-eminence, rejects the intervention of the writer and his friends, receives not the brethren, and hinders others from doing so (10). Demetrius, on the other hand, is of quite another character; he has the best witness (12). The greeting passes only from friends to friends (14). The similarity of the two epistles makes it very probable that they stand in close relationship to one another. The explanation that this similarity is due to the rigid habit of old age leaves out of account the liveliness of style and wealth of expression which characterise the main portions of each epistle. The true explanation is at once given by the further content of the two writings. From this we

see that the two letters followed one close upon the other; the second to Gaius is intended to replace the first which Diotrephes had intercepted. Diotrephes is either a partisan of the false teachers, or at all events an opponent of the Elder. He will not suffer the latter to lecture him before his flock; and therefore he even denies hospitable reception in the Church to the brethren that come to him with the Elder's commendation. As the letter to the Church did not attain its end, the Elder turns to a faithful friend in that Church and as a matter of course repeats to him the personal notices of his first letter. While in this first letter he wished to prevent the entrance of "the Antichrists" into the Church, so he would now secure the admission of those holding his own views. Indeed, one receives the impression that this Diotrephes was spiteful enough to fulfil the Elder's wish that "the Antichrists" should be rejected by rejecting all brethren that came from other churches.

There is no ground for assuming that the situation presupposed in these epistles is fictitious, that the anonymous Elder or the unnamed Church or the personages designated by name existed only in the brain of the writer. All is actual fact. But where did it take place?—and when? The letters scarcely afford us sure ground for an answer to these questions. All is possible within the limits of "the Johannine school." Nothing compels us to place these letters at a late date. St Paul's Epistle to the Philippians already shows us similar discords in the churches. The heresy that Jesus is not the Christ is the primitive thesis of all adversaries of the new Christian community. The letters make us acquainted with a man of patriarchal authority within a wide circle, like Timothy and Titus of the Pastoral Epistles, whose determining influence in the churches is opposed by local leaders.

### 3. The First Epistle of St John.

The so-called First Epistle of St John neither bears the name of John nor is it an epistle. It continues the line of development begun in the Epistle to the Hebrews and is simply a written sermon with universal address, the most ancient encyclical of the Christian Church. Indeed it is even scarcely this; for it is not an unity but a series of cycles of thought. Yet these cycles are so nearly related to one another that their boundaries constantly overlap. The same ideas and the same catchwords repeat themselves in the different cycles. All individual traits are wanting; only general ideas are brought into comparison with one another. Nevertheless the author knows the readers whom he addresses, and he believes that his word has authority with them. He often uses the first person (ii. 1 *f.*, 12–14, 26; v. 13). He calls his readers "his children" (ii. 1), more often simply "children" (ii. 12, 18, 28; iii. 7, 18;

v. 21), also "beloved" (ii. 7; iii. 2, 21; iv. 1, 7, 11), once only "brethren" (iii. 13). On one occasion he appeals to them separately, according to the distinction of age calling them "fathers" and "young men" (ii. 13 *f.*). However, he generally prefers to include his readers with himself under the general term "we," for to regard this word as referring only to the writer means to charge him with obscurity. Nor does a single passage give us sufficient justification for assuming that "we" is intended to distinguish the writer and a few like-minded brethren from the ordinary members of the churches, though of course what is asserted of "we" as applied to the whole Christian community does not all apply to each individual member. Thus it was possible for Christendom to say of her Lord, "That which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld and our hands have handled" (i. 1), even though no single individual now lived upon earth to whom these words could literally apply.

Leaving out of consideration the introductory and concluding notices (i. 1–4, v. 14–21) we can distinguish, with a fair degree of certainty, three cycles of thought in this epistle. (1.) In i. 5–ii. 28 the idea of a "heaven of good and evil" is combated. First it is shown (i. 5–ii. 17) that sin is something that no longer exists for Christians (i. 5–ii. 2), that rather the Christian declares himself to be a Christian in the fulfilment of the commandments of Christ which are summed up in Love (2–11); then comes, in spite of the proclamation of forgiveness of sins, a most earnest moral exhortation (12–17). This is followed by a warning against those who deny that Jesus is the Christ (18–28), with a reference at the beginning and the end to the Last Day and the Second Coming. How this polemical part connects with the first part will become clear as we proceed. (2.) ii. 29–iii. 22. Here the claim of morality is more sharply defined—first more formally, as "doing righteousness" (ii. 29–iii. 10), with evident point against those

who thought themselves raised far above moral claims; then more inwardly, as the exercise of Love (iii. 11–18); again with a concluding thought (iii. 19–22), reminding us of the first cycle, that we may assure our heart before God even though our heart condemn us. (3.) iii. 23–v. 13. Here the subject of discussion is the mutual relationship existing between faith in Jesus as the Christ and the fulfilment of His command of love, two demands which have already appeared as complementary aspects of the whole content of Christianity (besides ii. 18–28, also i. 7; ii. 2 *f.*, 6, 12; iii. 1–3, 16). The circles of thought here intersect one another. After the theme has been set in iii. 23—first (*a*) it is emphatically stated (iii. 24–iv. 6) that the co-existence of faith and love is the sign of the presence of the true spirit of God—a thought which reappears in iv. 13 and v. 1, 6, 8, 10. Then—(*b*) the importance of loving one another is discussed from all sides (iv. 7–v. 4)—the phrase "to love one another" is, with the exception of iii. 11, peculiar to the

third part; this virtue answers to the nature of God (iv. 8–10), and therefore only he who abides in Love abides in God (11–16); and again we are told that such an one alone can stand in the Judgment (17 *f.*); indeed, love for God and love for one another are really the same thing (iv. 19–v. 2); the concluding verses v. 3 *f.* sum up the passage. Finally (*c*) it is shown (v. 5–13) how only faith in Jesus as the Christ and fellowship with Him in Baptism and the Lord's Supper can render the soul capable of this love. What now follows in v. 11–21, like the conclusion of the Book of Revelation, gives the impression of a series of notes or extracts made by some reader. The first note (14–17) connects with the end of the second part (iii. 21 *f.*), taking up phrases therefrom. It is concerned with establishing an exception to the assurance that prayer will be heard, and in form and content it is distinct from the rest of the epistle (*e.g. cf.* 17 with iii. 4). The second note (18–20), with the words "we know" three times repeated, contains

extracts from some of the chief thoughts of the epistle, just as if some reader had wished to make an abstract of what he had learned from the work. The first extract (18), ethical in its purport, is from iii. 9; the second (19), religious in its purport, is from iv. 2; while in each case an allied thought is added. Then in verse 20 the foundation of the position of 18–19 is given in three clauses: the Son of God has come (*cf.* iv. 2); He has given us understanding to know Him (*cf.* iii. 24, iv. 13); we are in Him (*cf.* ii. 24). Then comes a profession of faith (20*d*) founded upon i. 2:—This is the true God and eternal life. Often the statements of this last section come nearer to those of the Gospel of St John than to the corresponding ones in the foregoing epistle. Thus compare verse 18 with St John xiv. 30, verse 19 with St John xvii. 15 *f.*, verse 20 with the "I come" of St John viii. 42; again verse 20, "to know Him that is true," with St John xvii. 3, and with the concluding profession of faith (20*d*) compare

St John vii. 28. Besides these, there are some other expressions which are alien to the main portion of the epistle though they might easily have suggested themselves to the author. The connection of the final exhortation (21) with the rest of the epistle has always been felt perplexing. If we take it as an epigrammatic statement by some reader of that which one principally learns from the epistle, then it becomes intelligible. The idol is the Christ in distinction from Jesus proclaimed by the false teachers; perhaps it may also signify their fondly-imagined freedom from sin.

Our interpretation of this concluding exclamation certainly describes the peril which our author was chiefly concerned to combat. Indeed the essential unity of the whole epistle, which is controversial rather than doctrinal in character, lies in this purpose of the writer. However, the ideas that are attacked are not held by the readers but only threaten to perplex them. The writer addresses them in tones of tender

affection and absolute trust. The false teachers have indeed proceeded from among the Christians but are not of them (ii. 19); they are false prophets (iv. 1), Antichrists (ii. 18, 22; iv. 3), however much they boast of their possession of the Spirit and of their esteem in the eyes of the world (iv. 1–5). Their false teaching consists of two propositions. One belongs to the moral sphere: they know no sin (i. 8, iii. 7), and the result is love of the world (ii. 15–17) and want of love for the brethren (ii. 9; ii. 29–iii. 22). The other touches the central truth of the Christian Faith: they deny that Jesus is the Christ, or, what is the same thing, is the Son of God; they believe in a Christ and boast of their knowledge of him (ii. 4)—but he is not Jesus (iv. 3). Evidently they find a special stone of stumbling in the death of Jesus (iii. 16, v. 6), since they imagine themselves to stand in no need of its propitiatory and cleansing influence, and in consequence they attach no importance to Baptism and the Lord's Supper

(v. 6–8). The Spirit is sufficient for them, and they are assured that they possess this Spirit (iii. 24; iv. 1–3, 13; ii. 26 *f.*). From this standpoint the introduction (i. 1–4) now becomes intelligible. It emphatically asserts that the subject of Christian preaching is a reality that can be conceived, can be heard, can be seen, can be touched—namely, the historical Jesus, no idol as the opposite thereto is called in v. 21.

Although similar false teachers are also attacked in the Pastoral Epistles, in the Epistle of St Jude, and in the Second Epistle of St Peter and even in the epistles of Ignatius, yet our author addresses his epistle not to universal Christendom but to the churches of the limited district with which he was closely acquainted and where his word carried weight. This district we can only suppose to have been the province of Asia, since here lay the home of that Johannine conception of Christianity which is represented in this epistle and is to a

certain extent presupposed among its readers. It is a striking fact that the author never alludes to the Old Testament, and that the Jewish Law stands quite outside his sphere of discussion. The epistle affords us no indication of its date; the false teaching presents no traits which force us to assign the epistle to the second century. Nothing prevents us from assuming that its author was "the Elder" who wrote the two epistles which in after days were combined with this epistle in the New Testament under the name of John; indeed, this is the more probable in that it is scarcely possible that two separate persons of the Johannine school could have occupied a position of authority so exactly similar as that which the three epistles presuppose in their authors, who in each case do not even think it necessary to mention their names.

The form of Christianity which is represented in these writings is grand and yet simple. Here we find no involved doctrines, here are

no sayings hard to understand. Jesus is the perfect Revelation of God, the Christ, the Son. In Him therefore the gate of eternal life is set open for us, in that through Him we enter into fellowship with God, and are called the Children of God if we abide in Him. He has cleansed us from sin by the propitiatory offering of His death. Only one thing is left for us to do, and that is to love one another; for to quote only the most illuminating of the many shining texts of this epistle—God is Love, and he that abideth in Love abideth in God and God in him.

This "Elder" must have been a man of deep inwardness and spirituality, one may even say a child-like soul: for nothing which belongs to the outward conditions of life, indeed nothing even which belongs to the outward form of thought, nothing that has taken form in history, catches his attention. The inward life is everything.

### 4. The Gospel according to St John.

There is scarcely a single book in the literature of the world which leaves upon us an impression so difficult to describe as this the most notable creation of the Johannine school. The book is not an homogeneous whole and yet it is harmonious. It is a perfect web of enigma, and yet the web is lost in the dazzling light which breaks through it. As we read we are in another world, the world of miracle—this gospel relates the turning of the water into wine and the resurrection of one who had been in the grave four days; and yet all, even these narratives, seems so natural and is so precious to us. The book affects our imagination like a transparent symbol of precious eternal truths. We forget the outward narrative and lose ourselves in its deeper significance. The characters appear in a strange twilight. We neither see them come nor go, we trace in them no development; they suddenly appear

and as suddenly vanish. They move as if in the air. They affect us like the stained windows of some dim cathedral as the light passes through them; earth with its manifold variety has vanished, all is so calm and toneless. Only these forms hover before us; they profess to be actual personalities, yet live only the life of typical characters. We see as it were only their distinctive profiles. Dramatic feeling and unity are not wanting and yet there is no proper movement in the scenes, just as it is in the conventional pictures of ancient Byzantine art. The touches are often marvellously delicate. We feel as it were the fresh breath of morning as the disciples pass to and fro at the Jordan. The night wind rustles round the chamber whither Nicodemus has crept in secret. The repining sun of summer shines upon the scene by Jacob's Well. Twilight falls upon the chamber where the Master washes His disciples' feet; and as Judas goes forth there is the darkness of night. The brightening

gleams of sunrise lie upon Joseph's peaceful garden as the greeting passes—Mary—Rabboni. And yet—where is all the fulness of colour? where the fresh scent of the earth? where the life of people, and the varied forms of their religious life as these all appear in the other gospels? Where are the Scribes, the Elders, the Publicans and Sinners, the Possessed?

And what is true of all the characters applies also to our Lord, the centre around which all revolves. He is ever the same, the Son of God moving among the things of earth. We trace in Him no development, no change answering to His environment. Whoever His listeners may be, He ever speaks in the same tone. Indeed, it is not to them or for them that He speaks, but beyond them. The content of His teaching is the same from the very beginning; though the words change, the subject is fundamentally the same—Himself. Whether men understand Him or no, He abides on the remote heights of lofty thought.

Just as it is reported at times to have really happened to Him, He passes through the midst of men unnoticed, untouched, like a being from another world. And yet waves of human feeling pass through His soul. At the marriage feast He rebukes His mother's presumption; on the Cross He is full of loving care for her. He is moved with indignation in the spirit, and His eyes are suffused with tears. He cries: "My soul is troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour"; "I thirst"; "None of you asketh me —Whither goes Thou?" A disciple lies in His bosom, the disciple whom He loved. And yet He has only hard words for the Jews, His own people. The Jesus of this gospel cannot weep over Jerusalem, He cannot be likened to the hen that would gather her chickens under her wings. From this Jesus who seems in sympathy with all that is human, we hear words of mysterious import: "Before Abraham was I am"; "Thou Father hast loved me before the world was." He asserts

Himself in words of the deepest spiritual significance: "I am the Way the Truth and the Life." And yet from the same mouth proceed sentences of the simplest and most striking imagery: "I am the Good Shepherd; and I know My own, and am known of Mine"; "I am the vine, ye are the branches"; "The grain of wheat cannot bear fruit unless it die." Again, beside words of the deepest spirituality—"We will come and make our abode with Him"; "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me"; "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"—we find words of the simplest ethical significance: "If ye love Me keep My commandments"; "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Beside words which seem narrow because they make everything depend upon His own person—"He that believeth not on the name of the only begotten Son of God is judged already"—stand words of wonderful breadth, freedom, and

clearness of vision: "The wind bloweth where it listeth"; "He that is of the truth heareth My voice"; "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"; "I have yet other sheep which are not of this fold, them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice and there shall be one flock, one shepherd"; "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall guide you unto all the truth." Yet how differently it all sounds from what we have been accustomed to in the other gospels!

How are we to understand this book? The preliminary condition of its comprehension is that we first clearly realise that it was not intended to be a work of history—not even in the limited sense of the Synoptic Gospels. Their interest also was not purely historical, yet they strive to attain their respective ends —the strengthening of faith in Jesus as the Christ (St Mark); the defence of Christianity

(St Luke); the promotion of Christian life (St Matthew)—by gathering together facts from the earthly life of our Lord, His acts and sayings, in a form suited to their respective purposes. If the intention of the author of our book had been only approximately similar to theirs, he would have kept to the literary types represented in those three gospels. In that he forsakes this type—and, indeed, consciously forsakes it, for he certainly was acquainted with St Mark and probably with St Luke—he at once betrays that he has different aims from theirs and has set himself a task of quite different character.

The first thing which strikes us is that the author did not wish to narrate history, even though he employed stories for his own ends, in this following at a remote distance the example of the Synoptists. If his interest lay at all in facts of history, then the written result shows that he was not capable of the task he set himself. And yet his book declares him to have been a writer of high and notable gifts.

The Synoptists themselves are a witness to the rich abundance of traditions handed down from the time of our Lord's public ministry, but our author incorporates in his work only the smallest portion of these—The Cleansing of the Temple (ii. 13–16), the Healing of the Nobleman's Son (iv. 46–54), the Feeding of the Five Thousand together with the Walking on the Sea (vi. 1–21), the Anointing in Bethany (xii. 1–8), and the Entry into Jerusalem (xii. 12–16). The Evangelist himself declares (xx. 30) that his work does not aim at being exhaustive in this respect. But does the reader attain to any real general conception of the active life of our Lord from these few narratives? Again how defective is even that which is imparted to us! The mission of St John the Baptist (i. 19, 25 *f.*), the Baptism of Jesus (i. 32 *ff.*), the imprisonment of the Baptist (iii. 24), are all presupposed but never related. We learn nothing of the calling of the Twelve who appear in vi. 67–70; nothing of the public Galilean ministry that is presupposed in vi.

1 *ff.*, not even what it was that drew our Lord to Galilee (vi. 1); nothing concerning the proceedings of the trial before Caiaphas in spite of xviii. 24, 28, nor what moved Pilate to put the question of xviii. 33. Our author loses the whole of his interest in both persons and situations as soon as they have served his doctrinal purpose. We cannot find out from him in iii. 10–21, 27–36, where the colloquy with Nicodemus and the words of the Baptist pass over into the reflections of the Evangelist himself. The Greeks which suddenly appear (xii. 20–22) are completely forgotten in the speech of our Lord which follows (xii. 23–28). According to ii. 13, our Lord with His family migrates to Capernaum: nevertheless on His return from Jerusalem He goes to Cana (iv. 46). According to vii. 3 no miracle had as yet been wrought in Jerusalem, while vii. 21 presupposes one and ii. 23, iii. 2, iv. 45, and vii. 31 mention many. In vi. 15 our Lord ascends the mountain, where He seems to be already according to verse 3,

and without any explanation of the change of scene He is found on the seashore (25), and in the Synagogue (59). We are not told in verses 15–17 why the disciples depart without our Lord, nor even where He left them when He departed to the mountain. There is no hint in xii. 44–50 whether any one is present to hear our Lord's words; it is enough for the Evangelist that they can be read. It is strange to notice how our Lord is represented as going to and fro in the sight of the Baptist without coming into direct contact with him (i. 29, 36). The succession of scenes is almost always unintelligible. What is the intention of the cleansing of the Temple?—(ii. 13–22). Has it indeed no aim, no further result? How could the perfectly public activity of chapters vii.–xii. have been possible after the Jews had determined to kill our Lord (v. 18), or the public scene of chapter ix. after viii. 59, or again the free movement in chapters xi. *f.* after x. 39–42? The discourse in Galilee, which seems as if meant to give offence

to the Jews, is quite impossible; nor can we understand the proposal of our Lord's brethren in vii. 3 or His conduct in regard to it (vii. 4–10). Our Lord's miracles as such have no interest for the Evangelist however much he intensifies the miraculous element in them. Small value is therefore ascribed to the faith which rests upon miracles, as we see from iv. 48, though the reproach here conveyed is not deserved by the father who is only concerned for the healing of his son. Indeed with this Evangelist miracles are only signs; they are types of spiritual truth; so it is with the miraculous Feeding of chapter vi., the Healing of the Blind Man (ix.), and the Raising of Lazarus (xi.). Thus they are no longer works of mercy wrung from the compassion of our Lord, works which even exhausted Him and were if possible avoided by Him; but they form as it were a course of object lessons planned by our Lord and prepared for beforehand. In this connection the motive of compassion seems to be

absolutely wanting in the Evangelist's portrait of Jesus.

It is no wonder that where the historical sense is so feeble the onward march of history cannot be traced. The narrative is not without movement but it proceeds without development. The movement is not like the onward flow of the river but like the rise and fall of the waves of the sea. From the first Jesus acknowledges Himself to be the Messiah (i. 42–50). The Baptist knows and proclaims not only His Messiahship but also His Death and its significance before our Lord had even entered upon His public ministry (i. 26 *f.*, 29, 33 *f.*). The Jews are His adversaries from the beginning so that Nicodemus is obliged to come to Him under the cover of night (iii. 2). Our Lord at once begins His conflict with them (ii. 13 *ff.*). Controversy succeeds controversy, plot succeeds plot, but nothing seems to be advanced thereby. Again there is no trace of development in the personality of the Lord. He knows and proclaims from the be-

ginning that He has come to die (ii. 19 *f.*, iii. 14 *f.*). It cannot but be otherwise with Him, for He foresees the future (vi. 64, xiii. 18, xviii. 4, xix. 28); indeed He is omniscient (i. 48, ii. 24 *f.*, iv. 16 *ff.*, xvi. 30). Therefore the Baptism no longer has for Him any kind of significance, and so there is no need for its narration. But also there is in this gospel no Temptation, no Gethsemane, no exceeding sorrow of soul even unto death—indeed, no longer even any need that Jesus should pray. Gethsemane is reduced to the saying of xii. 27–29, the cry "Eli, Eli" becomes "I thirst," the prayers of Jesus are spoken for the sake of the listeners (xi. 42, xii. 30, xvii. 13). It follows also that the author has no historic sense of the main lines of the history of our Lord's life, so that what he tells us often conflicts with the actual course of events according to the credible testimony of the other gospels. In these the field of our Lord's mission lies in Galilee, and the journey to Jerusalem forms the crisis leading up to the

final act; in our gospel, Jerusalem is from the beginning the proper scene of action while Galilee is only a place of retreat (ii. 1–11, iv. (43–54, vi. 1–71). Except in this gospel there is no record of a successful mission among the Samaritans (iv. 1–42); rather of the opposite (St Luke ix. 51–56). The only case of interference by our Lord in public affairs, the so-called Cleansing of the Temple, in the other gospels comes at the end but here at the beginning of His ministry. Its position in the former case is natural; in the latter it has rather the effect of an anticlimax.

However, the most striking proof that the author did not wish simply to follow the course of events is afforded in the construction of his work. This falls into three main divisions framed as it were in an overture (chap. i.) and a finale (chaps. xviii.–xx., xxi.). The former narrates the introductory events (i. 19–52), and, besides thus giving the work its right setting in time, also prefaces a passage (i. 1–18) which brings it into logical relation

with the inward spiritual development of the universe. In this passage, the so-called Prologue, the author gives into the hands of his readers the key which discloses to them the innermost nature of Him whom he wishes to set before them:—He is the incarnate Logos. There is no one English word which coincides with this Greek expression; it embraces both the active reason of God and the means by which He reveals Himself; it signifies a spiritual power, which is absolutely of the Divine essence and yet proceeds from God, as it has declared itself in the creation of the world and is operative in the soul of man. This Logos clothed in flesh and blood dwelt among men in complete fulness in Jesus. In Him the glory of this Logos was revealed to the eyes of men. The second introductory section (i. 19–51) connects with the movement of the Baptist and falls into two parts:—The Baptist (i. 19–34) and the disciples of the Baptist (i. 35–51). The Baptist himself is made to explain his rela-

tion to our Lord, first by giving testimony concerning himself (19–28), including his personality (19–23) and his mission (24–28), then by giving testimony to Jesus (29–34)—His significance (29–31) and His endowments (32–34). We are shown how the disciples of the Baptist pass over to our Lord (i. 35–51), among whom the chief figures are Peter (35–42) and Nathanael (43–51). The concluding section of the work comprises the history of the Passion and Resurrection, and is thus twofold like the introduction. Indeed, one can trace still closer analogy between the two. In the story of the Passion the witness of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," is developed in detail, while in the story of the Resurrection a return is made to the situation of the Prologue. As in the Prologue we are told that "The Word was God," so in the conclusion St Thomas makes his confession "My Lord and my God." While in the former we learn that "The same was in the

beginning with God," so now the Risen Christ proclaims "I ascend to my God." Between these two scenes of entrance and exit stands the drama of the Life, which falls into three acts. The first depicts that which is New in the gospel (ii.–vi.), the second opposes the objection raised by the Old against the New (vii.–xii.), and the third shows the realisation of the New (xiii.–xvii.). Each of these three acts is carried out in three cycles. The three cycles of the first act respectively develop the following themes:—(1) The relation of the New to the Old (ii. 1–iv. 42); (2) The nature of the New (iv. 43–v. 47—to which it is probable that vii. 15–24 originally belonged); (3) The appropriation of the New (vi.). Each of these themes is illustrated at the beginning by two stories: the first by the Changing of the Water into Wine and the Cleansing of the Temple in Jerusalem (ii. 1–22), the second by the Healing of the Nobleman's Son in Galilee and the Cure of the Lame Man in Jerusalem (iv. 43–v. 16), and the third by the Feeding

of the Five Thousand and the Walking on the Sea (vi. 1–25). The second and third cycles, in long passages of connected controversy between our Lord and the Jews, deal with the respective themes:—the Son gives Life—and we must eat of Him the Bread of Life; the first cycle on the other hand is divided into three scenes each with its subordinate theme:—(1) The origin and mission of Messiah (ii. 23–iii. 21) in contrast to Pharisaism; (2) Jesus is from above, the Bridegroom, the Son (iii. 22–36), in contrast to the Baptist; (3) Jesus is the Saviour of the world, the true worship is the worship in spirit and in truth (iv. 1–42), in contrast to the teaching of the Samaritans. The second main division of the book also falls into three cycles each prefaced by an introductory scene (vii. 1–27 except 15–24, which belongs to chap. v.; ix. 1–34; x. 40–xi. 44), and closing with a notice that our Lord withdrew Himself from His enemies (viii. 59, x. 39, xii. 36). These three cycles respectively deal with the themes:—The Origin of the Christ, the Nature of the Christ,

the Work of the Christ. The first two cycles each run into two logically distinct trains of thought—vii. 28–52, viii. 12–59 (vii. 53–viii. 11 does not belong to the gospel), and ix. 35–x. 21, x. 22–39. The third cycle describes our Lord's success among His disciples (xii. 1–11), among the people of the Jews (xii. 12–19), among Greeks (xii. 20–36). A concluding passage (xii. 37–50) sums up the whole of the second main division. The third main division, in which for reasons of all kinds xv. 1–xvi. 33 should be placed before xiii. 33, is introduced by the scene of the Washing of the Disciples' Feet (xiii. 1–32) and the allegory of the Vine (xv. 1–17). Its subject, the future communion with Christ, is discussed in three sections :—(1) The critical period of separation (xv. 18–xvi. 32); (2) The blessedness of the future communion (xiii. 33–xiv. 31); (3) The development towards perfection (xvii. 1–26). The preference for the number three which is manifested in the main lines of the structure of this noble work extends also to the treatment of details. The

preparatory history of chap. i. covers three days, our Lord journeys three times into Galilee and back to Judæa, He works three miracles in Galilee, He celebrates three feasts—leaving out of account the two Passovers at the beginning and close of the work (vi. 4 almost certainly does not belong to the original text); at the feast of Tabernacles three occasions of discourse are presented to our Lord, in the story of the Passion the declaration of the traitor is given in three scenes; there are three judicial trials, three attempts made by Pilate to save our Lord, three words upon the Cross, and three appearances after the Resurrection. It is quite obvious that a book which arranges its material according to rules such as these was not intended to be a work of history. It is a doctrinal text-book in historical vesture; it is a collection of dialogues whose teaching is illustrated by the pictures at their heads.

If we look closely into the discourses of our Lord in this gospel, we are at once struck

by the fact that they are never accommodated to the listeners and that the later discourses are continuations of the earlier ones even when the circle of hearers is quite different (*e.g.* x. 26 *f.* takes up the thread of x. 3 *f.*). This means that they are addressed to the readers of the book, not to those who are supposed upon each occasion to have heard them. And next we note what a contrast the subjects of these discourses present to the substance of our Lord's utterances in the other gospels! In these the piety, the morality, the hopes of the Jewish nation are reflected in abundant variety; here the question of the Personality of the Christ stands as the exclusive centre of interest; no questions arise out of the every-day life of the Jews, but only such as spring from a thoughtful meditation which here and there approaches theological subtilty; the Jewish Law—"your law," as Jesus Himself says, as if the Jews stood over against Him as an alien body (viii. 17, x. 34, xv. 25)—does not even come into view as a rule regulating

the daily life. In the Synoptists all is proverb and parable, in this gospel all is in the language of profound metaphor or even of allegory; there short pithy sayings, here long spun-out trains of thought. And how different is the form! Naturally there are not lacking in this gospel echoes of sayings of our Lord preserved in the other gospels; indeed its discourses are often based upon sayings which, though not recorded in the Synoptists, are yet of the same character as those which they hand down to us. But the difference far outbalances the likeness. Moreover the vocabulary of this gospel, which is in truth rather limited, has quite a different character from that of the Synoptists. It is by no means uncommon to meet with words and ideas derived from Hellenism which have become fundamental conceptions in this gospel—*e.g.* the idea of "Truth." Also the symbolical use of imagery from the Old Testament quite in the manner of the Epistle to the Hebrews—for instance the Brazen Serpent

(iii. 14), the Passover Lamb (xix. 36 *f.*), the Temple (ii. 19–21), the Manna (vi. 31 *ff.*)—sounds very strangely in the mouth of Jesus. Indeed, there are not wanting instances of purely dogmatic propositions which deal critically with passages of the Old Testament —*e.g.* compare "God is a Spirit" (iv. 24) and "No man hath seen God at any time" (i. 18) with Gen. xxxii. 31 and Exodus xxxiii. 11, and "My Father worketh hitherto" (v. 17) with Gen. ii. 2. In addition to these points it must appear very strange that in style as well as in ideas the discourses of our Lord absolutely coincide with the reflections of the evangelist; indeed, they occasionally pass almost imperceptibly one into the other as in iii. 10 *ff.*, 16 *ff.*, and xii. 37 *ff.*, 44 *ff.*

Now in all these discourses our Lord proclaims—so we are assured by the Evangelist—only what He has seen in the Spirit whether before His earthly existence or during the same, only what He had heard from His Father (iii. 11 *f.*, 32; x. 18). They really are,

however, only concerned with the nature of the Christ and the proof that Jesus is this Christ—the latter a theme which is also the subject of debate in the First Epistle of St John. But the centre of interest lies in the former theme, in the complete comprehension of that which belongs to the nature of the Christ, more particularly of what lies behind His human form of manifestation — namely, His relation to the Divine Being, His Pre-existence, His Risen Life and Work, and His station of pre-eminence above all that is in Heaven and Earth. Again, in connection with this subject the theological problem of harmonising this Divine Christ with the claim of monotheism is often taken into consideration (x. 30, 33–36; x. 9; xvii. 3). The few other questions of exclusively Christian interest which are touched upon have all of them reference to this Christ; they are also well known to us from the writings of St Paul and deal with the significance of the Spirit (xiv.–xvi.), the doctrine of the Resur-

rection (xi.), and the meaning of the Lord's Supper (vi.). We note also the tendency to bring the practice of Baptism into close connection with our Lord Himself (iii. 22, iv. 1 *f.*). So also our Lord is often made to speak from the standpoint of the apostolic epoch, as in the words "As Thou didst send Me into the world even so send I them into the world" (xvii. 18), or "Others have laboured and ye are entered into their labour" (iv. 38; *cf.* 1 Cor. iii. 5–15), or "Bear ye also witness (together with the coming Spirit of truth) because ye have been with Me from the beginning" (xv. 27; *cf.* St Luke i. 2), or "No man hath ascended into heaven but He that descended out of heaven" (iii. 13; *cf.* Ephes. iv. 8–10).

Summing up the preceding discussion, we may assert that the main purpose of this book was to give a comprehensive demonstration, in opposition to the objections of the Jews, of the proposition "Jesus is the Christ," and to declare its significance. The writer regards Judaism and Christianity as two sharply

distinct and mutually conflicting religions, and he sets the Jews in a most unfavourable light. He has also a subordinate interest in explaining the relationship of Christianity to the school of the Baptist (i. 6–8, 15, 19–51 ; iii. 22–36.; iv. i.; v. 33, 36 ; x. 40 *f.*). We do not see clearly the motive of these passages; but it is most probable that they were occasioned by an exaggerated reverence for the Baptist existing within the circle for which this gospel was written, or by a desire to bring over to Christianity adherents of the Baptist who were outside that circle. Our gospel shares with St Luke and the Acts this interest in the disciples of the Baptist. This book therefore presents an apology for the Christian Faith as opposed to Judaism, just as the Acts of the Apostles is an apology for Christianity against heathenism.

But why does the author choose this peculiar form for his work? It was suggested to him by his conviction of the supreme significance of the person of Christ Jesus—a conviction even greater than that of St Paul.

The whole scheme of Salvation is for him included in Christ. He is the Truth and the Life; He is the Light, the Bread, the Resurrection; he that sees Him sees God. Everything therefore depends upon whether we recognise Him as what He is and trust in Him. Hence the aim of the author, as he himself declares at the close of his book, is to confirm his readers in the faith that Jesus is the Christ in order that they may have life in this faith (xx. 31). He himself lives in this Christ through his faith that the Christ has appeared in Jesus. And as he has inward experience of the Christ through the records concerning Jesus, as he sees Him with the eye of his soul, so the historical form of Jesus is now transfigured into the glorious object of his spiritual vision. We may even say that he relates his own experience of the glorified Christ translated into historical shape and transferred within the historical bounds of the life of Jesus. And though it is true that he thus breaks

these bounds, who is there that would say that he has not seized and depicted with a touch wonderfully delicate and sympathetic the innermost nature of our Lord, or, speaking more exactly, what Jesus works in the soul indeed becomes in the soul that loses itself in Him? who would not confess that in his sweet unearthly picture he has given us the true religious import of that sacred Life?

But was the author justified in using for his purpose the historical form of Jesus? This question would never have occurred to himself nor to his contemporaries. Interest in pure history did not exist among the writers of antiquity, certainly not among those of the East. What we call the historical conscience is a modern discovery. History was then written as a means for conveying the author's own ideas. History is the daughter of poetry. Before men wrote history they composed legends and myths. The nearest parallel to that which lies before us in our gospel is afforded by the dialogues of Plato. In these

Plato presents his departed master, Socrates, in situations of his own invention though they are based upon the life of Socrates, and makes him state and thoroughly establish his own (Plato's) philosophical system in words which are only partly dependent upon genuine Socratic utterances. No one ever thought of reproaching him for such procedure; rather every one was grateful to him for raising in his writings so glorious a monument to the revered master. Again in Hebrew historical literature the prophetic element was always present. The past was seen in the light of the present and the future; men transferred to the past that which was the child of the past, they awakened in the past what was still slumbering within it. So also our author, though he was certainly conscious that he was not reporting historical fact as it would have been reported by a chronicler—how little mere acquaintance with historical detail meant for faith is indeed shown by St Paul's attitude towards the Life of our Lord—yet he was nevertheless assured that in

his gospel he was giving men its abiding eternal significance, its innermost heart. It sounds like a justification of his undertaking if in the gospel Jesus says: "The Spirit will glorify Me; He shall proclaim to you what I have yet to say unto you, but ye cannot bear it now; He shall lead you into all truth" (xvi. 12–24); "He shall bear witness of Me (xv. 26), and shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" (xiv. 26). Indeed, we may say that our gospel is the first fulfilment of the promise: "The hour cometh when I shall no longer speak unto you in proverbs but shall tell you plainly of the Father" (xvi. 25). At all events the author knows that he possesses this Spirit which, as he is convinced, is the possession of every one who loves Jesus and keeps His commandments (xiv. 22 *f.*)—the Spirit which, as St Paul says, searcheth all things, even the deep things of God (1 Cor. ii. 10). Our gospel in fact was written by one who was conscious that he was

a prophet, and it also proceeded from the same school as the Book of the Revelation of St John—the great prophetical book of primitive Christianity.

But can we say anything more concerning the author of this remarkable work? His character is fairly clearly reflected in his book. He is certainly of Jewish origin; his speech bewrayeth him. He avoids periods; he loves to place the predicate at the beginning of his sentences and to arrange these in a similar order of words; indeed, we occasionally find instances of Hebraic parallelism (xii. 44 *f.*, iii. 26). His vocabulary is not extensive though it is in part not of Semitic origin. He is acquainted with Jewish affairs and customs and upon occasion likes to give information concerning these (ii. 6, iv. 9, xix. 40): he is especially well acquainted with the Messianic ideas of the Rabbinic schools. And yet he stands in no inner relation to the Jews. He has nothing of St Paul's loving regard for his own nation: he ascribes to these Jews all

kinds of folly and malice. He seldom appeals to the Old Testament though it is always within his scope of vision. The Law as a code regulating conduct is quite outside his sphere of discussion; in fact the Old Testament is for him a collection of passages prophetic of the future (v. 39). In spite of iv. 22, he regards Christianity not as the fulfilment but as the opposite of Judaism; it is an absolutely new religion (i. 18, vi. 32, viii. 24, xii. 38–40). Galilee is quite without interest for him. Sea of Tiberias (vi. 1, 23; xxi. 1) can scarcely ever have been a local name for the lake of Gennesareth or of Galilee. It is only in Jerusalem that he seems to have intimate local knowledge. There he shows acquaintance with localities of all kinds; such as:—Solomon's Porch (x. 23), the Sheep Gate (v. 2), the Treasury (viii. 20), the Pool of Bethesda (v. 2), Siloam (ix. 7), Gabbatha (xix. 13), the Valley of the Kedron (xviii. 1). He has also access to information, which is lacking in the Synoptists, concerning details

in the course of our Lord's life; such as:—Our Lord's stay in Cana (ii. 1, iv. 46), in Sychar (iv. 5), in Ephraim (xi. 54); the Baptist's activity first in Bethany beyond Jordan (i. 28, ii. 26, x. 40), later in Ænon near Salim (iii. 23); Bethesda as the native place of St Peter and St Philip (i. 44, xii. 21); he knows that Simon was the name of the father of the Traitor (vi. 71), that many of the disciples of our Lord once followed the Baptist (i. 19 *ff.*), that Bethany was the home of Mary and Martha, (xi.); he informs us of the attitude of the brethren of our Lord (vii. 5), that the Pharisee Nicodemus was a secret adherent (iii. 1 *ff.*, vii. 50, xix. 39). He besides affords us some information of a less trustworthy character; such as:—The actual administration of Baptism by our Lord and His disciples (iii. 22, iv. 1), our Lord's frequent visits to Jerusalem at the feasts (ii. 12 *ff.*, v. 1 *ff.*, vii. 1 *ff.*), the attempt of the Galileans to make Him a king (vi. 15), the repeated attempts of the Jews to kill Him (viii. 59, x. 31–39), the saying of Caiaphas

(xi. 49 *f.*), our Lord's meeting with Greeks (xii. 20), Mary as the name of the anointing woman (xii. 2 *ff.*), St Peter as the disciple who cut off the ear and Malchus as the name of him whose ear was cut off (xviii. 10 *f.*), our Lord's Mother under the Cross (xix. 25–27), the appeal of the Jews to Pilate concerning the inscription on the Cross (xix. 21 *f.*), the piercing with the spear (xix. 35), the position of the sepulchre (xix. 41 *f.*). It is the more remarkable that our author seems to fall into the error of imagining that the high-priest held office only one year (xi. 49); if so, we have here a fresh proof of his want of close acquaintance with matters connected with the Jewish religion. On the other hand, he has appropriated many philosophical ideas of the Alexandrian school, thus taking his stand beside the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed the Prologue (i. 1–18), and also many a thought in the rest of the gospel, show an intimate amalgamation of the author's Christian belief

with elements of Alexandrian philosophy. Moreover he is not unacquainted with Christian literature, or, speaking more precisely, with the ideas presented therein. It is generally allowed that he was acquainted with St Paul's Epistle to the Romans and his First Epistle to the Corinthians; but he also shows so many points of contact with 1 Peter and Ephesians that it is almost certain that he knew these writings. The same conclusion does not necessarily follow from his agreement in many points with the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Gospel of St Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles. Common dependence upon the Alexandrian school forms a sufficient explanation of a likeness which is in this case very interesting because of the numerous points of coincidence in common tradition and tendency. The author himself is a strange combination of opposites. His usual course of calm thought is often disturbed by flashes of strong feeling; his deep mysticism is balanced

by a strong ethical bent according to which he would sometimes define Christianity as simply the fulfilment of the law of Love. In spite of his purely spiritual interpretation of Resurrection and Judgment his faith seems to require such material props as the miracle of the Blood and Water at the Crucifixion and, perhaps, the Flesh and Blood upon which he lays such emphasis in vi. 51 *ff.* in spite of verse 63.

### *The History of the Origin of the Johannine Writings.*

We do not know when the fourth gospel and the three corresponding epistles first began to bear the name of John. Since the third century this tradition has been firmly established, and likewise the belief that this John was the famous son of Zebedee one of the Twelve. In spite of this the two traditions require separate consideration. Let us begin with the question whether that John whose

name is expressly borne by the Book of Revelation was already in the second century generally regarded as the Apostle St John the son of Zebedee. Among the original authorities that have come down to us Justin Martyr alone calls the author of Revelation John the Apostle—assuming that the word apostle is not a later addition to his text. But even if it is genuine, Justin may have been guilty of an error similar to that of one of his contemporaries who has made Philip the Evangelist (Acts viii. 4–40, xxi. 8 *f.*) into the Apostle Philip. At all events Papias, who looked far more closely into past history than the philosopher Justin, knows as little as Polycrates after him and Ignatius before him of a tradition that the Apostle St John had worked in Ephesus. If such a tradition had existed, Ignatius could not have simply called the Ephesians comrades in faith of St Paul; nor could Papias, when speaking of his authorities, have included the son of Zebedee among others of the Twelve who had nothing to do

with Asia Minor in a separate clause from the two "disciples of the Lord" who dwelt in Asia Minor—one Aristion and the Elder John; nor again would the same writer have told us —without any reference to locality so that we are compelled to suppose that he means Palestine—that St John like his brother St James was killed by the Jews, even naming St John first. Polycrates again sums up as the great pillars of Asia Minor first Philip the Apostle (he means the Evangelist) with his daughters, then John "the witness (μάρτυς) and teacher"—who lay on the breast of the Lord, who became priest wearing the mitre, and was buried in Ephesus—lastly, a succession of bishops. Though so many titles of honour are here heaped upon this John, that of apostle, the highest of all in those days, is not among them. May we not say that this must be the same John whom Papias, as has been just said, mentions as distinct from the son of Zebedee in a passage where their names occur together? Papias himself had even heard this John, as we

learn from a fragment of his writings preserved by Irenæus and Eusebius. Irenæus also narrates as a reminiscence of his childhood that he had heard Polycarp of Smyrna tell of his converse with John and others who had seen the Lord and of their accounts concerning Him. Upon this occasion also John does not receive the title of apostle but the more general designation "disciple of the Lord." In another place Irenæus, just like Polycrates, asserts that this disciple of the Lord was he who lay on His breast; and, lastly, he testifies that this John lived into the days of Trajan. Thus the authorities of the second century, so far as they have come down to us, agree that a John lived in Ephesus—according to Irenæus until the days of Trajan, *i.e.* the beginning of the second century—and that he was held there in high esteem as a disciple of the Lord and one who had himself heard the Lord. Two of these authorities, Papias and Polycarp, claim to have known this John. Papias calls him "the Elder," Polycrates

names him "Witness," "Teacher," "Priest"; both writers declare him to have been "the disciple who lay on the Lord's breast" of the gospel. Neither of them, however, calls him "apostle" or says that he was one of the Twelve. It is only in the third century that this John is called "apostle"; and finally at the end of this century the two traditions were combined in the assertion that two Johns had lived in Ephesus, the Apostle and the Elder—of the first of whom the second century knew absolutely nothing, while the third century knew nothing of the second. To the authorities of the second century may now be added the Book of Revelation, the most ancient of all belonging indeed to the first century, in so far as it knows of a John, who, though he is three times mentioned by name (i. 2, 4, 9), is never described as an apostle, but rather, judging from the peculiar reverence shown in this book towards the Twelve Apostles (xxi. 14), is clearly distinguished from these. It can therefore

scarcely be doubted that there is absolutely no real evidence for the truth of the assumption, which has prevailed since the end of the third century, that the Apostle John, one of the Twelve, once dwelt and worked in Ephesus. This assumption rests upon the confusion of John the Elder, in favour of whom the evidence is as trustworthy as possible, with the Apostle—a confusion which occurred in the third century and is truly characteristic of a period which abounds in the grossest historical blunders.

But since Revelation bears the name of John we have a sure sign that this famous Elder had something to do with the so-called Johannine literature. For we cannot believe that two men of the same name, and occupying the same position of high esteem among Christians, could have lived at the same time in Ephesus. A second witness presents himself in the address of the second and third epistles of St John; for the "Elder" who describes himself as the author of these

letters must have been a man of high consideration, seeing that he does not deem it necessary to give his name. This again seems to exclude the supposition that two men could have borne the same title of "Elder." Moreover that this Elder John should have been "the disciple who lay on the Lord's breast" of the gospel, as say Polycrates and Irenæus, is in itself not improbable. In the narrative (St John xxi. 20–23) it is expressly assumed that he lived to a remarkably old age. The gospel itself in no way suggests that we should seek its author in the son of Zebedee. On the contrary, such an assumption presents difficulties on all sides. The son of Zebedee was a Galilean and was numbered among the first disciples of our Lord; but "the disciple whom Jesus loved" appears first in Jerusalem and in the last days of our Lord's ministry, and then so often and in such important connections that we can scarcely understand why the gospel has overlooked him up to this time. This

difficulty is emphasised by the fact that St Peter, who is constantly mentioned together with him during these last days, appears frequently in the earlier parts of the gospel (i. 41, 43–45; vi. 8, 68; xiii. 6, 8, 9). This Beloved Disciple may indeed be referred to and introduced to our notice in the first chapter in the nameless "other disciple" who followed the Baptist and became a disciple of the Lord just before St Peter was brought to Him by St Andrew (i. 35–41); this conjecture is indeed rendered the more probable by the fact that the very hour of his first meeting with our Lord is given. At all events, his frequent mention in company with St Peter (xiii. 23 *f.*, xx. 2 *ff.*, xxi. 15 *f.*) speaks in favour of the supposition that he is "the other disciple" who obtained entrance for St Peter into the palace of the high-priest (xviii. 15). He also may be one of the "two other" disciples of xxi. 2; if so, this passage would of itself afford conclusive evidence against his identification with the son

of Zebedee. If this well-founded conclusion is met by the objection that some reference to the son of Zebedee among the disciples of our Lord could scarcely have been omitted in the gospel, this is because the influence of the traditional combination of the son of Zebedee with "the disciple whom Jesus loved" of our gospel has caused that we fail to realise how seldom St John the son of Zebedee appears in the Synoptists. Apart from the story of the call of the first four disciples and the list of the Twelve, he is mentioned—and then only after St James and often with the addition "brother of James," as if he were unknown—as one of the four fishermen (St Mark i. 28, xiii. 3); as one of the three favoured disciples (v. 37, ix. 2, xiv. 33); as one of the two sons of Zebedee (x. 35, 41; St Luke ix. 54); finally in St Luke, as one of the two disciples, unnamed in St Mark, who with St Peter prepared the last Passover (xxii. 8), and once alone (ix. 49). Moreover St James, who according to the

Synoptists occupies an even more prominent position than St John among the apostles, is likewise never mentioned in the fourth gospel. Indeed the conclusion that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" must be one of the Twelve rests entirely upon the assumption that the Twelve Apostles alone participated with our Lord in the Last Supper. This idea has established itself in tradition because of St Mark xiv. 17, but there is nothing in the nature of the case to commend it—rather it is in itself highly improbable. Are we to regard that Supper as some celebration of secret mysteries, that all except the Twelve as a matter of course should have been excluded from it?—that young man for example who followed our Lord to Gethsemane, whom an ingenious conjecture declares to have been the Mark, whose home in later days formed the meeting-place of the Christians (Acts xii. 12) and was perhaps the place where the Last Supper was held? Why should the faithful women who accompanied our Lord to Jeru-

salem, why should His disciples from Jerusalem, presupposed at least in the Gospel of St John (vii. 3, iv. 1, xix. 38)—why should all these have been excluded? Indeed this gospel seems here, as on so many other occasions, to correct unostentatiously the Synoptic Tradition by the carefully chosen phrase "His own in the world" (xiii. 1) in introducing the scene of the Last Supper. Altogether there is nothing to suggest—indeed, there is much that renders it difficult to suppose—that our Evangelist regarded the Beloved Disciple as St John the son of Zebedee.

We now come to the second question. May we regard this "disciple whom Jesus loved" as the author of the gospel? This also has been accepted without question since very ancient days. But of this hypothesis also it must be said that while there is much that speaks against it there is nothing that speaks clearly in its favour. The very expressions "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and "who lay on Jesus' breast," if used by the author of

himself, are not quite free from self-conceit, however natural they sound from the lips of some devoted disciple of him who is thus described. Exactly the same impression is given by the famous verse (xix. 35) concerning the historical truth of the outflowing of blood and water from the pierced side of the Crucified. If we suppose that the words were written by the eye-witness himself, their form is forced and unnatural; if they were written by another in order to gain the reader's confidence in the authority he follows, all is simple and natural. "He that hath seen, hath borne witness, and his witness is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe." Whoever reads these words without prejudice sees two personalities before him. The first confirms what he has just related by the declaration; this narrative comes from an eye-witness—"he hath borne witness." He then as it were seals the testimony with two seals—his own, "his witness is true," and that of his authority, "he knoweth that he

saith true." The authority is without doubt the Beloved Disciple of verse 26, hence the other, the author of the gospel, cannot be he. The subscription of chap. xxi.—a chapter which is shown to be an appendix to the gospel by the solemn concluding words of xx. 30 *f.*—is of so peculiar a character as to demand further examination before we can employ it in our present argument. Verse 25 is distinguished from verse 24 by its use of the singular instead of the plural; and its tone of strong exaggeration as well as its repetition of xx. 30 makes us suspect that it is a later addition, like those verses which we have already shown to have been added to the Johannine Apocalypse. In verse 24, the unnecessary redundancy of the phrase "which beareth witness of these things and wrote these things" at least strikes us as strange. As the text now runs the words "and we know that his witness is true" implicitly ascribe the preceding part of the verse to another writer, so that they only give testimony at second hand and seem

therefore quite superfluous after xix. 35. But if we delete the unnecessary words "and wrote these things" as an addition probably from the hand which affixed verse 25, the rest of verse 24 may be easily understood as the last words of the Evangelist, and its connection with what precedes is exactly similar to that of xix. 35 with the preceding verse 34. The Evangelist himself here again appeals to the Beloved Disciple as an absolutely trustworthy guarantee for the truth of what he records; and the "we" answers to the "we" in the Prologue (i. 14, 16). No one who reads the gospel with understanding and gives the author credit for proper humility will imagine that by using the word "we" in i. 14, 16, he intended to describe himself as an eye-witness. In this word he simply associates himself with his comrades in faith, and what he here asserts of "we"—indeed, of "we all"—is only what every Christian, according to xvii. 24, is meant to experience.

Our whole investigation tends therefore to

show that the author of this gospel was a devoted adherent of the Beloved Disciple, to whose authority upon occasion he directly appeals as a trustworthy guarantee of the truth of his record, and to whom he pays a tribute of affection by the way in which he introduces him into the narrative of his gospel. He distinguishes himself and his friends from this Beloved Disciple and from the other personal disciples of the Lord as belonging to a different circle. And yet they too may declare that they themselves have seen the glory of the Only Begotten Son of the Father, though only with the eye of faith, and that they have received of His fulness grace for grace. And his gospel bears the author testimony, as he himself testifies of his revered patron, that he says truth.

The testimony which the gospel itself thus gives concerning its origin serves admirably to explain its own peculiar characteristics. If it rests upon the authority of John the famous "Elder" of Ephesus, and if he was a native of Jerusalem and once a personal disciple of our

Lord, then it is intelligible that his pupil should have suffered Galilee to fall so completely into the background while he is comparatively well informed concerning Jerusalem. From this John proceeds all the detailed information which we have summarised above concerning places, persons, and other small incidents of the Life of our Lord. The author himself is quite out of inward relationship with the Jews of Palestine ; on the contrary, his mind is rooted in that Greek culture in which he has grown up. The universalism of Christianity is for him a matter of course (iv. 21 *ff.*; x. 16 ; xvii. 6, 11, 22). How much of his conception of Christ is due to "the Elder"—whose reminiscences, though he had seen our Lord in the flesh, may well have been affected by the spiritual communion of later days and in some measure influenced by Alexandrian philosophical ideas—and how much is due to the author's own sympathetic development of the conceptions of his master, is a question that will perhaps never be definitely settled. We

may fairly assign to him:—numerous reminiscences of St Paul's ideas—the conception of Jesus as the Incarnate Logos, which is found in the Prologue but nowhere else in the gospel—the exaggeration of the miraculous element—and above all the thorough-going transformation of the utterances placed in the mouth of our Lord into the theological and philosophical language of the schools. It is probable that our author also consulted the Gospel of St Mark before he set himself to the work of editing the heritage left him by "the Elder." We may again make use of the analogy of the dialogues of Plato with their intermixture of Socratic and Platonic elements in order to illustrate the combined part played by "the Elder" and his pupil in the production of our gospel.

While our interpretation of the evidence afforded by the gospel itself in the light of the tradition of the second century gives an intelligible explanation of the peculiar character of this gospel, this remains an insoluble enigma

on the hypothesis—which is without support in the gospel and in early tradition, though it has been handed down untested from generation to generation since the third century—that St John the son of Zebedee was the author of the gospel or even was merely the authority upon which the Evangelist depends. How could he have forgotten Galilee? How could he show himself so wanting in affection for his countrymen, to whom his Master had devoted His life, with whom He had shown such touching and patient forbearance? How could he have so completely forgotten the whole great controversy concerning the validity of the Jewish Law in which he had taken a prominent part? (Gal. ii. 9). How could remembrance of the Personality of Jesus have suffered such total change in one upon whose eye and heart the whole public ministry of our Lord must have left an indelible impression? What could have led him, the foremost of eye-witnesses, to depend upon an account at second hand such as the Gospel of St Mark? How could he

have divorced the Cleansing of the Temple from its tragic connection with the final catastrophe of which he was a trembling witness? How could he have kept back all that he tells us until extreme old age, so that the other evangelists, in spite of all their zeal in collecting information, heard nothing of it? How could the Galilean fisherman, after knowing and hearing Jesus Himself, have had any taste for the speculations of Alexandria? And if he be also regarded as author of the other Johannine writings, how is it conceivable that a man of such literary and philosophical genius should have remained passive during a long life, and then in extreme old age should have suddenly taken up the pen and in the course of a few years have displayed such extraordinary literary activity?

Moreover, the problem of the relationship of the various writings of the Johannine school to one another, a problem which is insoluble in terms of the traditional hypothesis, finds its simplest solution in the light of our conclusions.

The John who describes himself as the author of the Christian Apocalypse would then be the Ephesian Elder who was at the time living in banishment at Patmos. The manner in which his name is introduced in i. 4 and i. 9 *ff.* is too unassuming, and the tone is too intimately personal, to permit us to suppose that the name was adopted by the writer in order to put his work under the patronage of this John. Jewish apocalyptic writers indeed were wont to write under an assumed name, but the name chosen was always that of some great saint of times long past; while the second early Christian Apocalypse, the Shepherd of Hermas, as is generally acknowledged, bears the name of its real author. It is true that it is scarcely possible to imagine that a book of this kind could have been composed by a man who, throughout the whole of our Lord's public ministry, stood under the influence of His spirit as did St John the son of Zebedee; yet it is quite intelligible as the production of one who may well have companied with our Lord

for only a few weeks or days during that intense period of conflict in Jerusalem, seeing moreover that the mental atmosphere of our Lord's disciples was full of these grand apocalyptic ideas concerning the future. And besides the spirit of intimate loving relationship to Christ, which breathes throughout the seven epistles of chaps. ii.–iii., admirably suits one who in those days as a young man lay on our Lord's breast at the Last Supper.

The two short epistles, named the second and third epistles of St John, have the same "Elder" as their author. They are indeed somewhat better written than the Book of Revelation; but apart from the influence which the Jewish Apocalypse incorporated in the latter work may have exercised on the style of the author, this improvement in style is sufficiently explained by the ten or twelve years which may have elapsed since the composition of the Book of Revelation. The tone of these epistles is very similar to that of the epistles to the seven churches; the same attitude of purely

personal authority is adopted in each case. The only advance in this respect is marked by the writer's assumption of the title "the Elder" in the two epistles. It is true that his authority is by no means unquestioned. He is made to feel that he is now really a man of the olden times, whom some regard as antiquated; and it is for this very reason that he chooses the title "the Elder."

Nor is there any reason for assigning our First Epistle of St John to another author. This epistle, though lacking both address and superscription, has been accounted an epistle of John at least since the end of the second century, and takes the first place among the Johannine epistles of the New Testament. It is a mistake to suppose from the tone of such passages as i. 5; ii. 8, 19, 25; iv. 6, 14, that the writer lays claim to apostolic authority. Rather he writes, just as did Ignatius a little later, in full consciousness of an authority grounded in his own personality; and this not without often gently apologising for such an

assumption of authority (ii. 7, 13 *f.*, 20 *f.*, 27), though indeed in much simpler fashion than the Bishop of Antioch. Also in this epistle the tone of address is strikingly allied to that of the seven epistles of the Book of Revelation. These two writings even coincide in favourite turns of expression which are foreign to the Gospel of St John. Thus they both describe the Christian life as a victory wherein the devil is overcome (Rev. ii.–iii. xii. 11, xv. 2, xxi. 7 ; 1 John ii. 13 *f.*, iv. 4, v. 4 *f.*) ; they unite in describing the opposite to the Christian profession as "denial" (Rev. ii. 13, iii. 8 ; 1 John ii. 22 *f.*). The victory is gained by the blood of Christ (Rev. xii. 11 ; 1 John v. 5 *f.*). Also the false prophet (Rev. xvi. 13, xix. 20, xx. 10 ; 1 John iv. 1) is an entity which is alien to the fourth gospel.

On the other hand, the only two writings of the Elder which are of sufficient length to allow of comparison are in character about equally removed from the gospel. In the case of the Apocalypse, its difference from the gospel

both in language and ideas forces itself at once upon the attention of the reader. Only to mention one point—the gospel in truly Alexandrian fashion spiritualises the very realistic and genuinely Jewish conceptions concerning Resurrection and Judgment which are found in the Book of Revelation. The points of difference between the gospel and the epistle are not so striking. Yet, in spite of their broad common outline and apart from not a few slight differences in literary form, a whole series of religious terms employed in the epistle are wanting in the gospel, and these indeed such as give expression to central ideas of the epistle; such as:—To have the Father, to confess God, to have the Son, to deny the Son, to do righteousness, to purify, propitiation, blood in connection with Christ's work of Salvation, promise, hope, the Second Coming, and others. Equally striking are important differences in the respective systems of religious thought and belief which appear in the two writings. In the epistle

we hear that God is Love, in the gospel that God is Spirit; in the epistle the Spirit is Truth, in the gospel the Son is Truth. In the epistle Christ is the Paraclete, in the gospel the Spirit is the Paraclete. In the epistle man's relation to God is direct—God in us and we in God; in the gospel it is indirect—the Father in the Son and we in Christ. In the epistle God and Christ are brought much nearer together. The epistle again never appeals to the Old Testament, indeed shows scarcely any trace of its influence; in the gospel the Old Testament is always within view of the author, it even bears witness to Christ (v. 39). All these differences, taken together with the close relationship of the two works, are easily intelligible if the author of the gospel was a disciple of the author of the epistle and of the Book of Revelation, a disciple who had developed along the lines of his own genius.

The date of the gospel cannot be exactly

determined. There is no reason to set it much later than the death of "the Elder" who lived into the days of Trajan, and so was alive at least in the year 98 A.D. and probably during the first few years of the second century. The year 110 A.D. would thus afford an approximate date. In v. 43 the reference is not to Barkochba but to the Antichrist. The wording of xi. 48 is far too vague to permit of the hypothesis that it presupposes Hadrian's command that Jews should not enter Jerusalem after that city had been newly founded as Elia Capitolina. Again the attitude towards Christianity prophesied in xvi. 2 is not confined to this later period. Nor is any trace of so-called gnosticism to be noted in the gospel. On the other hand signs are not absent that the Pauline period, indeed that the post-Pauline period in the narrower sense of the word, had already past. Persecution is already in full course (xv. 18–xvi. 4). The full detail with which the trial before Pilate is treated

no doubt reflects the actual procedure adopted in the trial of a Christian during the persecutions under the Roman government. Christianity is absolutely cut adrift from the Synagogue (ix. 22, xii. 42, xvi. 2), with which the Acts of the Apostles would still preserve some form of communion. The Gospel of St John moreover emphasises that interest in the Baptist and the Samaritans which has already appeared in the Lukan writings:—The disciples of the Baptist pass over to Christianity (iii. 22–36), the Baptist himself points them to Christ (i. 35); the movement spreads even to the Samaritans (iv. 1–42). Christianity is on the way to become a world religion (xi. 52; x. 16; xvii. 6, 11, 22; xii. 20–36). As in the Epistle to the Ephesians the unity of Christendom is a question of absorbing interest (x. 16, xvii. 11). As in the First Epistle of St Peter the government of the community becomes a matter of great moment and is dealt with under the metaphor of the Shepherd (x. 1–16, xxi. 15 *ff.*).

Baptism and the Lord's Supper seem to grow in importance and significance (xix. 34; *cf.* 1 John v. 6); they seem to have become subjects of discussion, even of controversy (iii. 22; iv. 2; vi. 1–13, 51–58). In connection therewith the question may have arisen whether our Lord lived to celebrate the Passover feast (xiii. 1 *ff.*), or whether He died on Nisan 14 (xix. 34, 36). Somehow or other the mysteries and their rites seem to make their influence felt (ii. 1–12, xiii. 1–20, xix. 34). At the same time Christianity itself gains, as a make-weight to the mysticism and exaltation of knowledge found in the gospel, the character of a new law whose formularisation is attempted (xiv. 15; xiii. 34; xv. 12, 17) in a fashion exactly similar to that of the Gospel of St Matthew (xxii. 40, vii. 12). It is moreover interesting to note that St Matthew, which like St John is a text-book of doctrine, though in its essential nature the antipodes of St John, still runs parallel to it at not a few points. The confession before Pilate, "My kingdom is not

of this world" (St John xviii. 36), has taken its most concise form in the expression "kingdom of Heaven" which is peculiar to St Matthew. The concluding words of St Matthew, "Teaching them to keep all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (xxviii. 20) corresponds to the Johannine "Keep My commandments" (*e.g.* xiv. 15). The promises of Christ's abiding presence with His people (St Matt. xviii. 20, xxviii. 20), again peculiar to St Matthew, repeat the fundamental thought of the Johannine Final Discourses (xiii.–xvii.). The injunction of the Risen Lord, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (St Matt. xxviii. 18), coincides with the saying of St John x. 16, "I have yet other sheep which are not of this fold: them also must I bring." Both gospels again are interested in legends concerning St Peter, among which St John xxi. 15 *ff.* forms a counterpart to St Matt. xvi. 18. They both agree in the endeavour to discover as many instances as possible of fulfilments of prophecy

in the life of our Lord, and indeed upon two occasions they coincide in the same quotation (St John xii. 40 = St Matt. xiii. 15, St John xii. 14 *f.* = St Matt. xxi. 4 *f.*). There is besides a similarity in their treatment of history. Neither of them recognise any development in the life of our Lord who from the first publicly appears as the Messiah. In both gospels the Baptist is the recipient of the revelation at the Baptism of our Lord (St Matt. iii. 17; St John i. 33). In both the same preference is shown for long discourses placed in the mouth of our Lord, while the narrative tends to fall into a secondary place. Both gospels are peculiar in adding stories which are of unmistakably allegorical significance. They both tell of an appearance of the Risen Lord near the sepulchre itself, and in both the empty sepulchre is an object of supreme interest. They even coincide in small details. Thus they both give, though not with verbal agreement, the saying, "Put up thy sword into its sheath" (St Matt. xxvi.

52 = St John xviii. 11); and they often agree in the wording of a phrase, as in St Matt. iii. 11 = St John i. 27, St Matt. xviii. 3 = St John iii. 5, and St Matt. x. 24 = St John xv. 20. Nevertheless it cannot be proved, nor is it even probable, that the one evangelist was acquainted with the work of the other. The truth is that both gospels have their foundation in the same plane of development, and that the construction of both is planned according to didactic considerations; but in the one case it is the spirit of the East, in the other the spirit of Hellas that we watch in the act of building.

The writings of the Johannine school have certainly exercised the most determining influence upon the further development of Christianity. The Book of Revelation above all other writings of the New Testament has preserved for Christianity—as it involved itself in the world and became a world power in the Catholic Church—its heavenward gaze and its hope for future perfection. From the treasures

of this book the pious imagination has ever clothed the simplest ethical and religious truths in grand symbols which have formed the most effective instruments in the education of Christian nations. On the other hand the Epistle and the Gospel have spiritualised the imagery of the Christian Apocalypse and have thus again and again afforded a corrective to that mythological element which sometimes finds somewhat gross expression therein. Above all they, with their simple demand for trusting unifying love for the glorified Christ and for the brethren as the mark of common Christian discipleship, have guarded the Church from all externalism in religion, more even than St Paul whose difficult doctrine concerning the Death upon the Cross was only too easily perverted into a mechanical theory of bargain and substitution. Moreover the Gospel met the need of the Hellenic mind, and of all other cognate minds, by laying down the lines—which still remain undisturbed—along which it was possible to combine intellectually

the historical manifestation of Jesus and its significance as comprehended in the term Christ with that new belief in God which Christianity also presented. No work has brought the truth of the Gospel so near to the mind of Hellas as the Gospel of St John.

But what a wondrous fellowship of souls, what a marvellous combination of spiritual forces is disclosed to us in these writings if we have rightly interpreted them!

First we discern a disciple of Jesus, a Jew by birth, who has drunk of the fountain of Alexandrian thought and over whose youthful life the form of the historical Jesus, the Incarnate Christ, has for a moment brooded like a passing vision. To the bright memory of a time of such blessed earthly fellowship with his Master, and to the Alexandrian faculty for spiritualising all things, he adds an imagination strongly disposed to the realistic Oriental symbolism of the Jew. In Ephesus he found ready to his hand the spiritual harvest of the mighty Apostle of the Gentiles now purified

from the taint of storm and conflict that had accompanied its ingathering. At the same time the Gospel of St Mark, so fresh with the breath of early enthusiasm and yet robust in its hold upon facts, afforded him a connected picture of the life of our Lord. Nor was the spirit of the classic city of secret mysteries behind with its contribution—that spirit which had already passed over into Christianity cleansed by the influence of St Paul. Then over all there passed the raging storm of the persecution of Domitian, clearing the air and opening up the landscape far and wide, and thus bringing to the birth those new thoughts and new mental attitudes which produced the literary movement of the post-Pauline writings.

And finally, this great Christian is followed by a disciple like-minded and sympathetic who has grown up among Greek surroundings and has been trained in the philosophy of Alexandria—a man of thought and a mystic, a symbolist and a painter, a character of calm and simple morality yet burning through

and through with the sacred fire of religious emotion.

Thus Christianity came by these Johannine writings in which its early literature was brought to a glorious close, summing up and including all that had gone before.

## SUMMARY

The literary movement of Primitive Christianity now reaches its close. The production of literary works of course does not cease; indeed the Epistle of Clement, the most ancient of the writings which were no longer incorporated in the New Testament, belongs to the same generation as the post-Pauline and Johannine literature. But it already bears the characteristic marks of the production of the following generation. The style is verbose; the thoughts tend to become shallow; there is want of concentration of interest; there is a lack of warmth of feeling; and above all, a decline of creative force.

But the heritage of the first two generations of Christianity which has been preserved to us in the collected books of the New Testament

is indeed rich enough for all needs. The sayings and parables of our Lord and the stories from His life, which are preserved in the Synoptic Gospels, will ever form the foundation upon which Christian thought and practice will be built. On the other hand those minds, which cannot but strive with bitter conflict of soul after some satisfactory solution of the antitheses of human nature, will find in St Paul their incomparable and indispensable champion. Finally, to those souls which are by nature meditative and introspective Johannine Christianity will disclose those deeps, where all wells up from one source, crystal-clear and yet unfathomable. Those moreover who have feeling for variety in human character and development as reflected in the mirror of history will delight in the characteristic phases of transition which are represented by the writers that fill up the gap between the Pauline and Johannine period —in the theologian of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the pastor of the First Epistle of

St Peter, in the churchman of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in the ecclesiastical statesman of the Lukan writings, in the religious teacher of the Gospel of St Matthew. No nation and no epoch of human development can boast of a literature in which the spirit whence it sprang has found more classic expression than Christianity in primitive Christian literature. This literature is indeed the very creation of the spirit of Christianity.

# APPENDIX

## The Epistle of St James—The Epistle of St Jude—The Second Epistle of St Peter.

It was a long time before these epistles, which we have yet to discuss, found an undisputed place in the New Testament. Both in date of composition and in the character of their contents they lie quite outside the course of development of early Christian literature, and they contribute nothing that is essential to our knowledge of the same. In a certain sense the Epistle of St James is the antipodes of the two others.

### The Epistle of St James.

One cannot speak of a train of thought in this epistle. It is simply made up of a collection of small complete essays, exhorta-

tions, or even isolated sayings. Many of these indeed are so deficient in characteristic Christian conceptions that one is justified in conjecturing that they are of Jewish origin. This is especially so with the connected passage (iii. 1–18) concerning censoriousness, and with the longer and shorter sayings which are appended to iv. 11 and which were perhaps added gradually, as in 1 Timothy, and include:—A warning against slander (iv. 11 *f.*), another against false security (iv. 13–v. 6), an exhortation to long-suffering (v. 7–11), a warning against taking oaths (v. 12), pieces of advice for times of sickness (v. 13–18), an exhortation to mutual brotherly support in the way of truth (v. 19 *f.*). We do not even obtain from these passages a clear idea as to the persons addressed. The sayings vividly remind us of those in the Book of Proverbs of the Old Testament, and are related neither in tone nor in style to any other primitive Christian writing. But the section containing a warning against earthly-mindedness and its

evil consequences (iv. 1–10) also contains nothing specifically Christian, though it affords some points of contact with 1 Peter ii. 11; v. 5, 6, 8 *f.*; while in the former passages, with the exception of v. 20 (where this epistle agrees, though not verbally, with 1 Peter in a quotation), no such likeness can be traced. We are therefore left with only the first two chapters. But even here there is no logical connection of thought. The first section (i. 1–15), which is held together by the catchword "Temptation," is really only a mosaic in which the related passages 2–4 and 12 are separated by 5–8 and 9–11, while in 13–15 the catchword "Temptation" makes its appearance with quite another signification. The passage 16–18 connects only very loosely with what has gone before. In a second section (i. 19–27) there now follows an exhortation to sincerity in the religious life, again without any definitely Christian trait. This section also is wanting in clear connection of thought. The next section

(ii. 1–13) is again a piece by itself containing an exhortation to impartial brotherly loving-kindness. Here again the style is disconnected, and except for the words "Jesus Christ" (ii. 1) there is no distinct reference to Christianity. Thus the only section which deals with definitely Christian conceptions is ii. 14–26, containing a polemic against misunderstood or at least misused propositions of St Paul. Accordingly the Epistle of St James cannot be described as a homogeneous literary work, or, indeed, as an epistle in the true sense of the word. In construction it is most nearly related to 1 Timothy, especially to the last chapter of that epistle, except that the latter deals with distinctly Christian questions while the concern of our epistle is with questions of universal ethics. Echoes of St Paul and 1 Peter are only heard in the short sections i. 2–4, 12, 18, 21; ii. 1, 5, 8, 14–26; iv. 1–6, 10 (v. 20 ?). In the rest of the epistle are found, besides countless echoes of Jewish writings, so many indications of the influence of the

classic literature of the Greeks and Romans as to be quite surprising when this epistle is compared with the rest of early Christian literature. If one omits the address (i. 1), and in ii. 1 the words "Jesus Christ" which seem to have been interpolated and in their present position disturb the expression "The Lord of Glory," then these portions of the epistle are entirely wanting in specifically Christian tone.

And yet it is difficult to assume that this writing is a Jewish work which has been adopted by Christians, although we might adduce analogous cases in support of the assumption. It seems unintelligible that in a book like this, if it were Jewish in origin, all that is specifically Jewish should so completely give place to what is purely ethical. And besides the section ii. 14–26, which deals with Pauline doctrine, would under such an assumption be difficult to explain. It is remarkable indeed but only accidental that the author bears the name of James. It is moreover quite obvious that he cannot have

been the brother of our Lord. How could such an one have written Greek so good and so completely unaffected by his Semitic mother-tongue! How could he have acquired his familiarity with the literature of the Greeks and Romans! Above all, he the brother of our Lord would surely have been able to proclaim to his Christian brethren something far better and more precious than the generalities of this epistle. The author indeed stands before us in the letter as a man of strong moral principle, somewhat deficient in depth and warmth of religious feeling, without any interest in dogma, more at home in Jewish than in Christian systems of thought, not without literary skill yet more as a compiler than an author. This revelation of his personality sufficiently explains why he allowed his work to go forth into the world under the patronage of the sainted leader of the early Church of Jerusalem. This epistle forms one of the original documents which show us how the Christians, just as they

accepted the apocalyptic symbolism of Judaism, so also thankfully appropriated, as a precious heirloom of their spiritual fatherland, those broader ethical principles of the Jews of the Dispersion which had developed in freedom from the cramping influence of the Judaism of Palestine. But this epistle also shows us how this heritage from Judaism gradually drove Christendom from the fertile fields of inward piety and heartfelt loving devotion to Christ into the somewhat barren moorland of a stringent and unemotional morality.

We need not trouble to ask to whom the epistle was addressed. Nothing in the epistle speaks in favour of their Jewish nationality; not even the expression "Synagogue" used in ii. 2 for the congregation of Christians, as is shown by Hebrews x. 25. Communities of Jewish Christians without an admixture of Gentiles, indeed without the knowledge of the existence of a Christianity free from the Jewish Law, were impossible in the Dispersion. The epistle addresses itself to Christians of

the third or fourth generation throughout Christendom. It makes us feel that the first love, the fire of enthusiasm, the endeavour after sanctification have seriously slackened. As in 1 Peter Christians are addressed as the true Twelve Tribes, that is, as the genuine Israel of the Old Covenant living in dispersion in this present world.

### The Epistle of St Jude.

The short epistle, whose author is described in the address as Judas the brother of James and thus the brother of our Lord who is mentioned in St Mark vi. 3, bears in contrast to the Epistle of St James evident tokens that it is really an epistle in the sense of a genuine Christian letter. Its one aim is to combat false tendencies which were spreading among the readers. These tendencies have much likeness to those dealt with in the Pastoral Epistles. They combine moral laxity (4, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18) with a pretended deeper knowledge, which tended to set at

nought the dignity of angels (8–10) as well as the authority of God and of Christ; more we cannot say with certainty. The author combats them with quotations from Jewish apocalyptic writings (14) in which he seems to be very much at home. He is acquainted with the Old Testament, though no quotation therefrom is met with in what is of course only a short epistle. Nor does his work disclose any definite trace of the influence of early Christian writings. Thus he occupies an isolated position. The ideas of the epistle are not of high religious value. It is fairly conclusive for a late date that "faith" has already become an objective entity with a definite content (3, 20), that tradition has become authoritative (3), and that its champions, "the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ," are a closed circle belonging to the past (17). In spite of the universal tone of the address this epistle evidently has in view limited sections of Christendom; the related phenomena described in the Book of Revelation

and the Pastoral Epistles would suggest Asia Minor. How the epistle came by the name of Jude cannot be determined.

### The Second Epistle of St Peter.

The Second Epistle of St Peter is only an expanded edition of the Epistle of St Jude. It stands in the same literary relationship to St Jude as Ephesians to Colossians, 1 Timothy to 2 Timothy and Titus, and 2 Thessalonians to 1 Thessalonians. The position presupposed by the Epistle of St Jude has undergone further development—the false teachers are more impudent, the condition of affairs is more serious. The Epistle of St Jude is accordingly taken as a foundation and is developed to meet the needs of the new situation. The characteristically diffuse greeting (i. 1–4) is followed by an exhortation to walk worthily (i. 5–11), and the exhortation is enforced by a reference to the expected Second Coming of Christ (i. 12–21). To this is attached the author's reproduction of the

Epistle of St Jude (ii. 1–22), amplified by a passage refuting the false teachers' denial of the Second Coming of Christ (iii. 1–7). The conclusion returns to the subject of the first part of the epistle and first repeats the promise of the Second Coming and then the exhortation to godly living (11–16), to which a renewed warning against the false teachers is attached (17–18). The thought of this epistle is in no way influenced by the epistles of St Paul. Here and there we may perhaps trace in it the influence of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of St James. It has scarcely more in common with 1 Peter than its name. The style of the two epistles is absolutely distinct: 1 Peter shows, it is true, more literary skill; but 2 Peter, while absolutely distinct in composition and vocabulary, is more purely Greek in character. The two epistles agree neither in the name and the title of the author, nor in the address and the description of the recipients, nor even in the conclusion of each. 1 Peter is

strongly influenced by St Paul and the Old Testament; 2 Peter shows no trace of such influence. 1 Peter is incomparably the richer in profound thought and spontaneity of religious feeling. The Passion and Resurrection of Christ stand in the foreground of 1 Peter while they are wanting in 2 Peter.

The address of this epistle gives us as little information as St Jude and St James concerning the readers for whom it was intended. Its contents would apply to true Christians of all places. Nor does the text of the epistle afford any distinct indications pointing to particular churches as recipients: only the appeal to 1 Peter in iii. 1 allows us to conjecture that the Christians of Asia Minor occupied the first place in the mind of the author. The recipients, whoever they may have been, were of course Gentile Christians. Their faith in the Christian tradition was being shaken by the false teachers (ii. 21, iii. 2), who were causing schism among them. These were making use of the doubts which had been

awakened in the minds of Christians by the continued delay of the Second Coming; they appealed to their own interpretation of the Old Testament (i. 20, iii. 16), indeed even to St Paul (iii. 15 *f.*), whose champion the author constitutes himself while pointing out the extreme difficulty of a right understanding of his writings. Our epistle bears everywhere the traces of a late date. The apostles are a closed circle (i. 1, 4; iii. 2); they as a matter of course agree with one another (iii. 15), and take a position of authority by the side of the commandment of Christ and the Old Testament (iii. 2, 16). This authority is even assigned rather to their writings than to their personality (iii. 16). The significance of Christ lies in the first place in the fact that by means of the apostles He has transmitted His commandments to men (iii. 2) and has given them a pledge of future glory (i. 4, 11). He is the God and Saviour of the Christians (i. 1) although they must contend for their own salvation (i. 10). This all points to a date much

later than the first century. This epistle is indeed a really pseudonymous writing, that is it really professes to have been written by St Peter himself, and it is thus the first of a series of such forgeries under the name of St Peter, as we must call them, which continually increased in volume after the second half of the second century. This trait in the epistle distinguishes it from 1 Peter and Ephesians, which profess to be written only in the name and the spirit of the heroes of the first century. The phantom Peter of our epistle emphasises the fact that he belongs to the circle of apostles endowed with canonical authority (i. 1–4, 16; iii. 2, 15; i. 17–19). The author enhances the effect of his epistle by representing it as St Peter's last word before his death (i. 14 *f.*). We do not owe to this epistle any ideas of high religious value.

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